

PLUCK AND LUCK

COMPLETE
STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at the New York Post Office, November 7, 1898, by Frank Tousey.

No. 317.

NEW YORK, JUNE 29, 1904.

Price 5 Cents.

OUT OF THE GUTTER!

OR, FIGHTING THE BATTLE ALONE (A TRUE TEMPERANCE STORY.)

By H. K. SHACKLEFORD.



Dan had eaten a few mouthfuls, when he took a swallow of the coffee. Of course he detected the brandy in it. His eyes blazed, and the next moment he sprang to his feet, and dashed the cup of coffee into Kennedy's face.

PICTURE BOOK
STORIES OF ADVENTURE
COMPLETE

THE STORY OF THE
PICTURE BOOK

OUT OF THE GUTTER
OR FIGHTING THE BATTLE ALONE (A TRUE EMERGENCY STORY)



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PROLOGUE.

"Dan McCrae you can't come in here!"

"Why not?"

"Because I have to draw the line at men who roll in the gutter as you do. Why, you would run all my customers off. You have got down too low. You can't drink at my bar any more."

"But I must have a drink. I am dying of thirst."

"You can't come in here, I tell you! Go elsewhere for your lish."

"You know well enough that I have no money to go elsewhere with, and——"

"You can't get any more here without the money either, nor with it, as for that matter. Be off with you now."

"Give me one more drink."

"Not another drop. Get out now, or I'll fire you."

"I won't go till I get a drink."

"You won't, eh?"

"No, I won't."

"Well, we'll see."

The rum-seller seized the youth, who was only about eighteen years of age, and rushed him out of the saloon as if he were nothing but a child in his hands. Out on the sidewalk he hurled him from him with great force, hissing:

"Stay in the gutter, where you belong."

It was in Madison street, in the city of New York—a city of more human wrecks than any other on the continent.

Stunned by the fall, the youth lay in the gutter, and people who saw him lying there believed him to be a chronic inebriate, and took no farther notice of him.

When he came to he found himself bruised and bleeding. Yet the thirst that raged within him hurt even more than his wounds. He would gladly consent to be thrown out again could he but get a drink of liquor by so doing. Drink, drink,

was all he craved, and for that he would have bargained away his soul.

He arose and staggered to the sidewalk, his pallid, bloated face wearing a look of pain, and glared around him as if half-dazed by the fall.

"My God!" he heard an old man say as he passed by. "He is one of Malley's wrecks, and now he has thrown him out of his place."

He turned and looked at the old man.

The old man had been a great friend of his father's in the days of his prosperity. His father and mother were now dead, and his young sister gone, he knew not where. Urged by the impulse of his overpowering thirst, Dan McCrae staggered after the old man, calling him by name.

Mr. Rives, for the love of God, give me a dime!"

"Dan, Dan!" said the old man, shaking his head sadly, "has it come to this? Begging on the streets!"

"Yes, sir. I have just come out of the gutter. But for the friendship you once bore my father, give me a dime. I must have a drink, or I shall go mad."

"Why not let drink alone and make a man of yourself?" the old man asked. "You have a good education and a bright mind. You——"

"Give me a dime first, and the lecture afterward, please," pleaded the youth. "I am in as much pain now as you would be were you bound and laid on a bed of coals."

"Here's a quarter, Dan," and Mr. Rives handed him a coin as he spoke.

"Thank you, sir. I—I——" and he turned and ran into a saloon near by, where he called for and drank a brimming glass of fiery liquor, paid for it, received his change, and came out.

The liquor brought back some color to his ghastly face, and his eyes gleamed with a fierce light as he looked into the saloon from which he had just been so rudely ejected.

He was standing there when a young girl came up and spoke to him, saying:

"Dan, father has just told me that you were thrown into the gutter by a saloonkeeper. Is it true, Dan?"

He looked at her in silence for a few moments, and then said:

"Yes; Obed Malley threw me out. I am going to get even with him for it."

"How?"

"I don't know—smash his head for him, maybe," he replied, with a dogged sullenness.

"Let me tell you how, Dan," said the girl.

"How!" he asked.

"Don't drink another drop of his or any one else's liquor, and then the time may come when you can avenge yourself on him. Be a man, Dan McCrae! You have the heart, soul, and brain of one. You won't lack for friends if you let liquor alone. Will you do it, Dan?"

Dan looked at the bright, pleading face before him. She was Emily Rives, the daughter of the old man who gave him the coin a few minutes before, and was about the same age as himself.

They had been playmates and schoolmates in the past, when the two families were intimates. But now—his parents were dead and he was in the gutter—a drunken, friendless youth.

"Will you do that, Dan?" she asked again.

"Yes, if I can," he replied.

"You can—you can, if you try hard," she said, and then she ran away because a crowd of roughs began to gather about them.

Dan gazed after her like one in a dream till she was out of sight, then he muttered:

"She is the only one who gives me a kind word. She is an angel. But I am going to have it out with Obed Malley. The old rascal swindled my father out of all his money, and now throws me out into the gutter when I have no money or friends."

He rushed into the saloon again, warmed up by the liquor he had drank, and glared at Obed Malley, the proprietor of the gilded den of iniquity.

"Get out of here now, or I'll fire you!" said Malley, coming round from behind the bar.

"Obed Malley," he retorted, "I am what you made me. You swindled my father out of all his property, which caused my mother to die of a broken heart. You made me what I am by giving me all the liquor I could drink, till now I must have it or go mad. When I didn't need it you gave it to me, and now, when I would give my soul for a drink, you will not even let me come into your place. I am going to go, but I will return to make you wish that you had never been born."

"Get out of here, you gutter loafer!" roared the rum-seller, "or I'll break every bone in your miserable body!" and he made a rush at him.

Dan stooped and picked up a heavy stoneware spittoon which he hurled at his head. The rum-seller went down like a log, and the assistant barkeeper then ran at Dan, downed him with a bungstarter, and then picked him up and hurled him out into the gutter again, where he was lying unconscious when a policeman came along and sent him to a hospital in an ambulance.

CHAPTER I.

THE DISASTER ON THE BRIDGE.

On the day of the formal opening of the Brooklyn Bridge a living mass of humanity was passing across it, going both

ways. It was such a novelty to cross the great river on a bridge—and such a bridge!

An elderly man was moving along down the incline toward the New York entrance, and a youth of some one-and-twenty years of age was by his side. Yet they were utter strangers to each other.

Just as they reached the top of the small flight of steps that led down to the lower footpath someone stumbled and fell.

Ere he could rise to his feet the pressure behind forced others on top of him.

The old man tried to hold back to avoid not only stepping on those that were down, but to keep from being trampled on himself. But one had might as well attempted to stand against Niagara's current as against that living, surging stream of humanity on the down grade.

The old man uttered a cry and then a groan. He was not a large man nor a strong one. But the active youth by his side caught him in his arms as he went down, and, by the most strenuous efforts, held him up till he could get to the railing, to which he clung with one hand.

But even there an enormous pressure was brought to bear on them, for men fought for their lives like human tigers, and ere the struggling youth knew what had happened he heard the old man he was holding up utter a cry of intense pain, and then seemed to sink in his grasp as if dead.

"My God!" groaned the youth, "I am crushed to death!"

The groans and shrieks from the wounded ones were awful to hear, and still the mass of humanity pressed forward and trampled them under foot.

"Back! Back, for your lives!" cried the youth.

But those who were near enough to see what had happened could not get back.

They couldn't even stop, for the pressure behind them carried them forward in spite of themselves, and the work of death went on.

Then came the police, and the confusion became greater than ever. Still the youth held on to the old man, till, when the pressure relaxed, he sank down with him among the dead and dying victims of the terrible disaster.

They were taken out by the police and sent in an ambulance together to the same hospital. They were taken to be father and son, and so were placed near each other in the same ward.

The old man was unconscious, but the younger one recovered consciousness on the way, though very badly hurt.

"What is your name?" the surgeon in charge asked of the young man.

"McCrae," was the reply. "Daniel McCrae."

The name was written down D. McRay.

"Your father's initials, please?" the surgeon asked.

"J. McCrae," he replied.

Then they began to examine his hurts. He was in great pain and was about to faint.

"Here—take a drink of this brandy," said the surgeon, holding a glass half full of brandy to his lips.

He gave a convulsive movement with his right arm and knocked the glass out of his hand, spilling the brandy on the bed clothes and floor.

The surgeon procured another and brought it to him.

"No—no—no—not that!" he cried. "Not that—not that—in God's name!"

They believed he was crazed with pain and attempted to make him swallow it.

When he saw that they were going to force it down he tried to say something, but they held his nose and forced it down his throat in spite of his struggles to prevent them from doing so.

"There, now! You'll feel better now," said the surgeon, standing over him and speaking kindly to him.

"Curses on you!" cried the youth. "My curse be on you! Drink made me a drunkard and rolled me in the gutter till not a human being in all the wide world would call me friend. I fought it as no man ever fought for his life, and conquered, and now you have forced the hated thing down my throat in spite of my struggles. I feel it coursing through every fiber of my frame, rekindling the old fires to burn more fiercely than ever before, and now the battle has been lost, after three years of hard fighting. Curse you! Curse you!" and he sprang upon his feet, badly hurt as he was, and glared at the dumfounded surgeon as if he would like to tear him limb from limb.

"Why didn't you tell us that before?" the surgeon asked.

"You gave me no chance. I told you 'No, no, not that,' and you seized and forced it down my throat! It's burning up my vitals! Give me another glass! Brandy! Brandy! Give me another glass of brandy!"

He made a spring to seize the bottle on the table, when he was again seized and held back on the cot.

"Had I known all I do now," said the surgeon, "I would not have given you the brandy. But I will see that you are not given any more, but shall have a substitute or antidote that will, in a measure, allay the thirst it has aroused."

"Curse you for an idiot!" cried the young man, very much excited. "Give me some more of it and let me die. I cannot fight the battle over again. I am burning up with thirst as though I had swallowed a quart of molten lead!"

They gave him opiates, and after a half hour or so had him under their influence so that he slept. Then the surgeon gave orders that under no circumstances was he to have any liquor of any kind.

The old man was more dead than alive. Two of his ribs were broken, and other injuries were found of a very serious nature.

The surgeon shook his head as he progressed with the examination.

"He is badly hurt," he said. "The chances are against him."

By and by the old man opened his eyes, and the surgeon asked:

"How do you feel, Mr. McRay?"

"I am in pain all over," he replied. "But my name is not McRay."

"Not McRay! What is your name then?" the surgeon asked.

"My name is Nisbet."

"Nisbet?"

"Yes."

"Isn't that young man over there on that cot your son?"

The old man turned his eyes on the youth on the cot four feet from his own, and looked hard at him.

"No," he said. "I have no son. I don't know who he is. He tried hard to save my life on the bridge, and but for him I'd have been trampled to death. I hope he is not hurt."

"Yes, he has been hurt, but not as much as you have. Have you any family, Mr. Nisbet?"

"No. I live at the National House on Adams street in Brooklyn."

"Have you no relatives?"

"None that I know. Why do you ask? Am I going to die?"

"The chances of recovery are against you," replied the surgeon.

The man looked up at the doctor in silence for a few moments, and then asked:

"How long will I live?"

"One or two days, and then you may live for years. But if you have any affairs to settle I would advise you to do so at

once. Two of your ribs are broken, and you have been jammed and squeezed to such an extent that a man of your age cannot have but the slightest hope of getting over it."

The old man closed his eyes for a few minutes and groaned as if in pain. Then he opened them again and asked:

"What is his name?" looking over toward the young man on the other cot.

"He gave his name as Daniel McRay, and we thought you were his father. We asked him what his father's name was, and he said 'J. McRay.'"

"My name is Nisbet—Joel Nisbet. I—I knew a man of the name of McCrae, but he is dead now. This may be his son. In my coat pocket was a bank-book. Is it there yet?"

One of the attendants looked into his coat pockets and found a bank-book, with a large wallet filled with papers.

"Is this it?" the attendant asked, holding up the bank-book.

"Yes; bring me a pen."

A pen was brought him, dipped in ink.

"Hold me up, please, till I can write a few lines."

The surgeon and attendant helped him up in bed.

"Oh, Lord!" he groaned, "I am in such pain!"

"You had better lie down again," said the surgeon.

"No, I'll write now," and he opened the bank-book and wrote on a blank leaf:

"Pay all money due me to Daniel McCrae.

"The — National Bank,

"Joel Nisbet, N. Y."

The pen dropped from his hand, and he fell back on the bed in an agony of pain.

In a little while he spoke again, and said:

"Give him my wallet and its contents—my clothes, watch, and everything I have in my room in Brooklyn."

"Better let me write all that down and then sign it," said the surgeon.

It was done, and he signed it in the presence of the surgeon and the attendant.

"He risked his life to save mine," he said. "My blessing be with him."

He lay there and slept under the opiate that was given him, and at midnight breathed his last.

CHAPTER II.

AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

When young McCrae came to, or rather awoke out of his sleep into which the opiates had thrown him, he was told that the old man, whose life he had tried so hard to save, was dead.

"I am sorry," he said. "Who was he?"

"He said his name was Joel Nisbet," said the attendant. "He left you his bank-book, wallet, clothes, and other effects, together with his blessing."

"Where are they?"

"The surgeon has them."

"I am burning up with thirst. Give me something to drink."

"What will you have?"

"Anything that will quench this burning thirst."

He gave him a glass of water.

"That won't do. In God's name give me some brandy."

"The doctor says you are not to have it."

"Curses on him! He made me take it when I didn't want it,

and now won't let me have it when I do want it. Call him here."

The surgeon came and Dan demanded brandy of him.

"I'll give you something that will quench that thirst and not intoxicate you," said the doctor, and in a few minutes the prescription was prepared.

"I made a grave mistake yesterday, my young friend," the doctor said. "You must not give way to that thirst. You have fought a noble battle, and now you must let your manhood pull you through again."

Young McCrae did not say anything. He was now watching the effect of the medicine which had been given him. In a little while he slept again.

When he awoke another day had passed, and he was feeling much better. Then it was that the bank-book, wallet, and will of Joel Nisbet were given him.

"The old man was very grateful to you for what you had done for him," said the doctor.

He looked at the bank-book, and saw that he was about \$3,000 richer than when he started across the bridge on that terrible day.

"Thank God!" he murmured, as he closed his eyes. "I can now search for her, or hire a detective. I'll find her if I have to travel the world over."

He lay there thinking, thinking, till he forgot all about the wallet and will of the old man who had died on the cot next to his.

"I'll find you now, Nellie," he murmured to himself, "if you are alive in this wide world, and be the brother to you I once was. Where are you now? Are you with friends and kindly treated, or with brutal people who treat you like a slave? Oh, if I only knew, if I only knew," and he buried his face in his hands and wept.

A few days later he was told that he could leave the hospital whenever he pleased. He went away, taking the wallet and bank-book with him.

His room was on a side street, and his landlady wondered what had become of him. She seemed to be very much surprised when he told her what had happened to him.

"A gentleman has been here every day to see you," she said to him.

"Who was he?"

"I don't know. He didn't leave his name."

Daniel McCrae found that she had kept his room and few effects in proper order during his absence, and, after thanking her for so doing, sat down at a table to look over the contents of the wallet which the old man had left to him.

It was full of papers, many letters, and closely written sheets of paper, on one of which he saw the name of Joel Nisbet, the old man whose life he had tried to save. On another he saw the name of Obed Malley, the rich liquor merchant, who owned a wholesale house and a dozen saloons in New York and Brooklyn.

The latter was simply a memoranda in these words:

"Obed Malley papers in my possession. Bring him to terms—make him disgorge and do justice. Will be his Nemesis."

"Obed Malley! I know him," said the young man, "and a worse money-grasping man than he never lived. He threw me out of his place and came near killing me once, and I cracked his head with a spittoon. He got my father involved in a speculation with him once, and it was in that move we were beggared. I'll look up the papers mentioned here and see what they refer to."

In going through the papers in the wallet he came across some formidable legal-looking documents referring to some

real estate, which he could not understand. He laid them aside to examine more at leisure, and went on with the search. There were many references to business transactions, which were all Greek to him, and after an hour's time thus spent he returned all of them to the wallet with the remark:

"I'll look over them again."

Then he left the house and went to the bank and presented the bank-book.

The cashier looked at the book and saw the check transferring the deposits to Daniel McCrae.

"Are you Daniel McCrae?" he asked of Dan.

"Yes, sir," he replied.

"But you'll have to be identified. We don't know you."

A big stout man was in the row behind him, and when he heard the name he placed a hand on his shoulder, forced him around and looked into his face.

"Why, Dan McCrae! Are you really alive?"

"Yes, Obed Malley, I am alive," replied Dan, "but that is no fault of yours, is it?"

"Do you know him, Mr. Malley?" the cashier asked of the big man.

"Yes, I know him—he is Dan McCrae, and this is the first time I have seen him in ten years. I am glad to see you, Dan."

"I am not glad to see you, Mr. Malley, and I don't ask you to identify me."

"That's all right, Mr. McCrae. The money is transferred to your credit," and the cashier passed the book back to him after making an entry in it. "I'll have a new book for you to-morrow, if you wish."

"Thanks, sir," and Dan was going to leave when Malley caught him by the arm and walked toward the door with him, saying:

"See here, Dan. You have no right to bear me a grudge."

"I haven't?"

"No. I fired you out and you fired me into a hospital with a broken head. When a man gets into the gutter he can't go into any decent place, you know."

"But you put me into the gutter. You made me what I was, and I made myself what I am. I want nothing more to do with you."

"Dan, I am your friend yet, if you will let me be one," said Malley, in low tones. "I am glad to see you on your feet again. Come and see me at my place, and maybe I can tell you where your sister is."

Dan started as if stung, and looked up at the face of the man he hated above all others on earth.

"Do you know where she is?" he asked.

"I did know," was the reply, "and am sure that I can find out her present residence."

"Have you seen her since you saw me last?"

"Yes."

"Is she—was she well then?"

"Yes, and is now, so far as I know. Come and see me, and I'll see if I can't put you in the way of finding her. So you are doing well and have money in the bank, eh? Well, well, I am glad to hear it."

Dan had the bank-book in his hand, on which was the name of Joel Nisbet. Malley saw it, and gasping out the name, staggered up against the wall, looking like one who had seen a ghost.

CHAPTER III.

SPREADING THE NET.

Besides owning a large wholesale liquor house, Obed Malley was also the proprietor of a dozen saloons in New York City

and Brooklyn. The wholesale house had been opened but a year or so previous to the time of the great bridge disaster. He spent most of his time going from one saloon to another, looking after them and keeping an eye on the business done by each.

Such a man was a power in the city of New York, and politicians paid court to him. He had no political ambition save such as would lead to money making. All his energies were focussed on that one objective point.

Among the numerous young politicians who frequented one of his gilded gin-palaces was Gus Meyer. He was a brilliant talker, a good speaker, and an adroit schemer. He had great ambition, but lacked the money to back it, hence he had allied himself with the rich liquor dealer in the hope of getting that influence which he knew so well how to wield.

On the evening after his meeting with young McCrae in the bank Obed Malley met Gus Meyer and said to him:

"I want to see you in my back office. Come with me."

Young Meyer followed him, and when they were alone together the liquor dealer said:

"I am going to make a bargain with you, Meyer. You want to get into the City Hall. I can place you there without any trouble. But before I do so I have something for you to do."

"Just name it, my dear Malley, and I will do it with all my heart."

"Well, it's this: There is a young man in this city who has a grudge against me for firing him out of my place on Madison street three years ago. He has some money now, and does not drink. His name is Dan McCrae, and is about twenty-one years old. I want you to get acquainted with him, become intimate, and lead him into drinking again—learn his secrets—particularly about his hatred of me, and let me know all he says. I'll allow you one hundred dollars a month spending money for the purpose. What say you?"

Meyer grasped his hand and said:

"I am yours to command."

"Very well. He had a sister of the name of Nellie, who is about eighteen or nineteen years old now. He has lost track of her, but would give his soul to know where she is. She is tall and beautiful, a brunette. Make him believe that you know her, and that you think that you can trace her up. By that means you can make him go anywhere with you and drink. Do you understand?"

"Yes, fully."

"Well, I'll see that you have a chance to get acquainted with him," and the liquor dealer arose to leave the office.

"A gentleman wishes to see you, sir," said one of the attendants of the place, putting his head in at the door.

"Tell him to come in here."

A minute or two later Dan McCrae was ushered into the little private office.

"Ah, glad to see you, Dan," greeted the liquor dealer. "Let me introduce you to Mr. Meyer, a rising young politician. Mr. McCrae, Mr. Meyer."

The two young men shook hands.

"I am glad to see you, Mr. McCrae," said Meyer. "Mr. Malley has been asking me about a young lady of your name whom I met at Saratoga last summer."

"Saratoga!" gasped Dan.

"Yes. She was the companion or adopted daughter of a very rich old lady who was spending the summer there. She is named Nellie, and I heard her say her parents were dead, and that she had a brother named Dan, but didn't know whether he was dead or alive."

Dan dropped into a chair and said in husky tones:

"Can you trace her up and tell me where she is? I'd give my soul to find her."

"I think I can, and I assure you that to do so would give

me the greatest pleasure in the world. Let's have a bottle of wine, Mr. Malley. Will you join us in a glass of wine, Mr. McCrae?"

"No, sir. I never drink any liquors of any kind," replied Dan, very firmly.

"Have a cigar, then."

"Thanks, but I never smoke."

"Then I won't have any myself. I always respect a man's principles," remarked Meyer.

"Of course—of course," said Malley. "A man can drink or not, just as he chooses. I hope you may soon have the pleasure of meeting your sister, Dan."

"Thanks," returned Dan. "If I do I shall forgive you much, Mr. Malley, on account of it."

Malley laughed, and turning to Meyer, said:

"Dan and I once had a scrapping-match, and he sent me to a hospital with a broken head while he went to a police station. He has it in for me yet, I believe."

"Oh, let by-gones be by-gones," said Meyer, laughing.

"By the way, Dan," said Malley, "you were in the bridge disaster and was hurt trying to save a life. I saw it in the papers but did not know it was you. They spelt the name McRay."

"Yes," said Meyer. "I saw it, too, and so you are the man."

"But while he nearly lost his own life, he did not save the man he tried to protect," added Malley, "as he died in the hospital of his injuries."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, and left all his property to him out of gratitude for what he had tried to do for him."

"Ah! I hope you got something handsome, Mr. McCrae?" said Meyer.

"Nothing to speak of," said Dan. "A wallet full of papers and a few things in his rooms."

"Have you looked through all his papers yet?" Malley asked. "There may be a fortune among them, you know."

"Not all of them. I haven't had time. Did you know him?"

"Yes. He was a confidential man in a real estate office when I knew him—a singular sort of man he was."

Dan did not appear at ease in the place, and as soon as he could he arose and said:

"I should like to meet you again, Mr. Meyer, and——"

"Yes, yes. I'll meet you here to-morrow evening, and perhaps I may be able to get the information you desire," and he gave his hand to him with a cordiality that was pleasing to Dan.

Dan left the saloon, after bidding good-evening to Malley. No sooner was he out of sight than Malley fairly hissed in Meyer's ear:

"Follow him and hire a man to down him and get that wallet. He has it with him! I saw it outlined on the left side of his coat!"

Meyer was amazed, and looking up, asked:

"What is in it?"

"Papers that I must have."

"I didn't agree to do that sort of business."

"No, but your fortune will be made if you do that for me. I'll back you in everything, even to running for mayor. Hurry up, before he gets too far away."

Meyer left the saloon in a hurry, and walked briskly up the street toward Broadway. In a few moments he saw Dan waiting on a corner for a street car.

Strange to say but one man was in sight, and Meyer did not see him.

He seemed to be lurking himself behind a stoop across the

way, and saw Meyer knock Dan down and rifle his pocket of a big wallet, with which he ran away.

"Blast my eyes!" said the lurking individual. "That cove is a bold 'un! He'll divvy with me or I'll have it all," and he darted away in pursuit of him.

Meyer ceased running for fear of attracting attention to himself, and the pursuer soon overtook him.

They reached a dark place in front of some residence, where the pursuer attacked him by dealing him a blow that staggered him almost off the sidewalk.

But Meyer was a tough one himself, and in a moment he was defending himself with a vigor that worried his assailant. The latter placed a hand in his pocket, drew out a slung-shot, dealt him a blow on the head, and grabbed the wallet as he sank down to the ground.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WALLET RETURNED.

On coming to Dan found himself lying on the pavement where he had fallen on being struck. He was half dazed, and hardly knew what had happened to him. But he got upon his feet and staggered along like a drunken man.

"Somebody hit me," he said, and then he felt for his pocket-book.

It was there in his pocket, and its contents untouched.

"I thought I had been robbed," he said to himself. "But I wasn't. It must have been an accident of some kind. I didn't see anybody about when I was hit. Hello! I am bleeding from a cut on my head!" and the sight of the blood instantly decided him. He went into the nearest drug-store and asked to have the wound dressed.

"How was it done?" the druggist asked.

"I don't know. I was hit from behind and never saw anyone at all."

"Were you robbed?"

"No. I have my watch, chain, and pocketbook, as you may see."

"Well, that's strange," remarked the druggist, as he examined the wound.

"Yes, I can't understand it," said Dan. "I am going to see the police about it."

The druggist dressed the wound in a very skilful manner, for which service Dan paid him one dollar. The young man then went on his way toward his quarters, wondering who it was who had knocked him down just for the fun of the thing.

On reaching his room he drew off his coat and hung it up, after which he looked through his pocketbook to see if its contents had been interfered with.

"It wasn't done by a robber, that's certain," he said, as he replaced the pocket-book. "I'll tell the police about it to-morrow and see if they can't trace it up."

Then he made up his mind to look through the papers in the wallet Joe Nisbet had left to him, and see if he could not get any information from them. Going to his coat, which he had hung up, he felt for the wallet, and found that it was gone.

"Ah, I was robbed after all!" he said to himself. "I was followed and knocked down for that wallet, and nothing else!" and he sat down to think about it, and the more he thought the more he believed that he had been knocked down by one who was after the wallet.

"My money and watch remained untouched," he said, "and both were easier to get at than the wallet. Who could want the wallet but one interested in the papers? Who is interest-

ed in the papers? Nobody but Obed Malley that I can find out. The memoranda referred to making him do justice to somebody, and said that a Nemesis was after him. Now I must have been followed from Malley's place. But then, how did anybody know that I had the wallet with me? Was Malley after the wallet? Did he have me come to his place with a view of getting it from me? Oh, I wish I knew! What a fool I am! Why didn't I leave that wallet in the bank with the money Mr. Nisbet left me? Why should I be carrying it around with me like a goose?"

Then the thought struck him that the man who would knock another down for a wallet of papers would hardly leave a watch and chain on the victim and a pocketbook with ten dollars in it.

"The wallet may have fallen out of my pocket when I fell, and it may be there in the gutter now, for all I know. I'll go out there and look for it," and he went out, his head bandaged up, and made straight for the street where he had been assailed.

On reaching the spot he hunted along through the gutter, but did not see anything of a wallet.

It was now quite late—at least twelve o'clock—and but few people were about in that part of the city.

A man came along and stopped to look at him as he searched the gutter. He was a bad-looking specimen.

"What's yer lost, boss?" the man asked.

Dan looked up at him, and said:

"I was knocked down here about two hours ago and robbed of a wallet. But as nothing else was taken from me I did not know but what it might have fallen out of my pocket into the gutter."

"That's curus," said the man. "Was there any money in the wallet?"

"Not a penny. But I'd give ten dollars for the wallet and its papers."

"Yer would?"

"Yes."

"An' ax no questions?"

"No."

"Waal, hyer's yer wallet. Gimme ther ten dollars, boss," and he handed the wallet to Dan as he spoke.

He recognized the wallet at a glance, and opened it to see if the papers were all there. He could not see that any were gone, and so he took ten dollars from his pocketbook and gave them to him.

"You might make some sort of explanation," he remarked, as he gave him the money.

"Waal, I don't mind, boss. I was over there under that ere stoop er-waitin' for a pal of mine, when I see yer comin' erlong. When yer stopped for ter catch er car a cove slipped up an' downed yer, scooped the wallet, an' skipped. I thought it was big swag, an' put out after 'im, an' downed 'im an' got it. I found it contained nothin' but papers, an' come back to meet my pal. That's how it was, boss."

"What kind of a looking man was it who hit me?" Dan asked.

"He was er dandy for good togs—gray suit an' brown derby, an' was kinder short like, with a mustache what curled at the ends."

"Ah! A young man—say twenty-five years of age?"

"Yes, I guess he was."

"Thanks—I am much obliged to you," and Dan turned to leave, when the man asked:

"What time is it, boss?"

"I don't know. Ask that policeman coming down the street there."

The man started, looked quickly around, and hurried away

from the spot, leaving Dan to make his way back home with his watch, which he had designs upon.

"How fortunate it was that I decided to come out and look for it," he said to himself as he walked away. "I am quite sure that Meyer, the young man Malley introduced me to, is the one who knocked me down. But how could he have followed me so far from the saloon without my knowing it? Ah, he wanted me to drink so he would have me in his power to rob me without any trouble. I'll know when I meet him again if he was the one who knocked me down, for that fellow was downed too, and not by my gentle hand either, I imagine."

Once more in his room, Dan put the wallet in his trunk, and went to bed. But, late as it was, he could not sleep for thinking of his young sister, Nellie, who had disappeared when he was a slave to drink and could not take care of her. Since he had risen out of the gutter his every thought was of her, and somehow he believed that Obed Malley, who had made him a drunkard, knew what had become of her.

Notwithstanding the fact that he had reason to believe that Gus Meyer was the man who had robbed him of the wallet, he made up his mind to meet him at Malley's place again the next night, and see if he could get any clew to her whereabouts, and having so resolved he went to sleep to dream that somebody was trying to force him to drink brandy again.

The next morning he awoke with a very sore head, and thought he had better keep in his room all day, and he did so. During the day he looked over the papers again and found that his own father's name was on some of them. But the legal verbiage so confused him that he could not understand them, try hard as he would.

"I don't know whether they are of any value or not," he said, as he looked at them. "I shall have to take them to a lawyer and get him to tell me what they are. I judge that they are papers that once belonged to Obed Malley, and that Joel Nisbet got hold of them in some way. Malley seemed to be afraid of the very name of Nisbet. I'd gladly give them up to him if he would only tell me where poor Nellie is. I could take care of her now without any trouble. We are the only ones left of our family—if she is really alive."

He had caused all the effects of Joel Nisbet to be removed to his room, and now he had quite a collection of things he did not really need, and was wondering what he should do with some of them when a knock on his room door startled him.

CHAPTER V.

THE FALSE FRIEND.

For a moment or two Dan made no response to the knock on his door. Then he arose, placed the wallet in his trunk, locked it and then opened the door.

It was Marie, the tidy little maid-of-all-work of the house. "A gentleman downstairs wishes to see you, Mr. McCrae," said Marie.

"Who is he?"

"I don't know."

He went down with her, and was very much surprised at finding Gus Meyer there.

"Hello!" greeted Meyer, springing up and grasping his hand. "I came over to see you. What's the matter with your head?"

Dan had the bandage still on his head. But he noticed that Meyer had none on his.

"I was knocked down and robbed last night," he said.

"Where? When?"

"On — street, after I left you," and then he told the particulars.

"But didn't you see your assailant so as to describe him to the police?"

"No; I was struck down from behind."

"Well, that's too bad. I'm sorry to hear it. What did you lose?"

"Only a large wallet with papers in it."

"No money."

"Not a cent. My purse, watch, and chain were not touched, and that's the strangest part of the affair."

"Why, yes, that does seem strange. Were the papers of any value or importance?"

"I really don't know, but suppose they were. They were left to me by Mr. Nisbet, whom you heard me speak of last night. I had not made myself familiar with them."

"They must be valuable to somebody or that attempt to secure them would not have been made."

"I have thought of that myself," remarked Dan. "If I knew just how to describe them I would offer a reward for them."

"Did you have your head dressed by a doctor?" Meyer asked.

"No—a druggist did it for me."

Dan looked slyly about the head of his visitor to see if he could find any indications of a blow, but did not see any.

He at once came to the conclusion that Meyer was not the man who struck him. Having come to that conclusion he at once turned his thoughts to the matter of finding his sister.

"Have you any idea of where the old lady you met in Saratoga lives, Mr. Meyer?" he asked.

"No; but I am sure she lives either in New York or Brooklyn. I think I know a man who knows her well, and I wrote him a note this morning asking him about her."

"Thank you a thousand times," said Dan, all his feelings aroused. "I would owe you a debt of gratitude all my life if you should bring us together."

"How did you come to be separated from her, Mr. McCrae?" Meyer asked.

Dan told him the sad story of his downfall, how Obed Malley had made him a drunkard by giving him all the liquor he could drink till he became a sot who rolled in the gutter.

"Malley seems to have none but the kindest feeling toward you," said Meyer.

"Well, I can't feel that way toward him. He made me a drunkard and then brutally kicked me out into the gutter. I have sometimes thought that it was he who brought about the ruin of my father, and that he has known all along where my sister was."

"I am quite sure that you do him an injustice," said Meyer.

"I do not think so, but as he is your friend I will say no more about it."

"Oh, don't mind me. I am used to that sort of thing, and let every man have his own opinions, thinking none the less of one for expressing them."

But Dan would say no more on the subject, and the conversation turned on other things.

"You never met Nisbet till the day of the bridge disaster, did you not say?" Meyer asked.

"No, never knew that such a man lived," Dan replied.

"He certainly was a very grateful man, wasn't he?"

"Yes. He left me everything he had. That big trunk over there was his. It was full of clothes, books, and papers."

"You can't wear the clothes."

"No. I am going to sell some and give others away. I know a young man whom they will fit. But he drinks awfully, and is fast going down to the gutter."

"It's a hard matter to save a man when he gets into the gutter."

"Yes, but the right means to do it are seldom used. Words of kindness will do more than acts of repulsion. I am going to see if I cannot save Joe Swift. He has the making of a man in him, and if he can be kept from drinking he will make one, too."

"I think that a man who can't control his appetite ought not to drink at all," remarked Meyer.

"Nor the man who can, either," added Dan, "for he thus tempts the man who can't. The man who asks me to drink with him, knowing my past, is my worst enemy. I cannot regard him in any other light."

"I think that is going too far. Why should I not ask a man who is a glutton to dine with me? Should I consider that he might eat too much?"

"Gluttony is not a disease like that of drunkenness," said Dan, shaking his head.

"Not as bad, I'll admit, and yet I am inclined to think that it kills as many as people as whisky does."

"That may be true, but it does not make brutes of men, nor incite to crime as liquor does."

"No, that's true, and yet the man who drinks should be expected to control himself as well as he who eats."

"The man who drinks gets drunk and doesn't know what he is doing, whereas the glutton may be, and generally is, sober all the time. There is a vast difference between the two. We have two men boarding here in this house. One is a glutton who rarely drinks; the other is a drinking man who eats but little. The drinking man is a terror whenever he gets on a spree. He comes home howling like a lunatic sometimes, and tries to clean out the whole house. He has been on a spree now for several days. The glutton may be killing himself, but he annoys nobody."

"Oh, I grant that one is worse than the other," said Meyer. "But I have been drinking for ten years past, and have never been drunk yet, and what's more——"

A loud voice was heard on the stairs outside the room door, and a moment later it was quite clear that the drinking man had come home accompanied by one as drunk as himself.

They entered the room adjoining Dan's, and made so much noise that the landlady came to him to ask if he would not go in there and try to quiet them.

"I don't like to do it," he said to her, "for one man doesn't like to have another interfere with him."

"Both of you might quiet them," she suggested, looking at Meyer.

"Yes. Come on, McCrae," said Meyer. "I'll go with you," and they both arose and went into the room together, while the landlady nimbly tripped down the stairs again.

CHAPTER VI.

A SINGULAR MEETING.

On entering the room Dan called out to the occupant of it:

"Hello, Slayton! Got a load on, I see."

"Yes, thatsh sho," said Slayton, balancing himself with the back of a chair.

"Well, let me introduce you to my friend Meyer—a royal good fellow."

"Glad ter (hic) she yer," said Slayton, shaking hands with him.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Slayton," replied Meyer, as he shook his hand.

Slayton then tried to introduce his companion, whom he called Stanton. Stanton was not as full as Slayton, a fact both Dan and Meyer instantly discovered.

Dan also made another discovery, and that was that he was the man who had brought the wallet back to him the night before, after it had been taken from him.

The man seemed to be somewhat abashed for the moment, but soon recovered his equanimity, and shook hands with them as if he were as glad to see them as one gentleman could be to see another.

But Dan could not help wondering what he was doing there, and whether or not he had been shadowed.

Meyer engaged Slayton in conversation, while Dan and Stanton stood by the window and talked.

"We have met before, sir," said Dan to him.

"Yes, and I believe I rendered you a little service once," was the reply.

"So you did, but I don't think you meant to do so."

"Neither did he," nodding his head toward Meyer.

"He had nothing to do with it," said Dan.

"He didn't, eh? He was the cove who downed yer, an' got the wallet what I give back to yer."

Dan started.

"Are you sure of that?" he asked.

"Yes, of course I am. I know the cove."

"Is he a crook?"

"Dunno—never saw 'im till last night. He works like an old hand, though."

"Is Slayton a crook?"

"No."

"How came you with him?"

"We have been friends er long time."

"And he doesn't know that you are one?"

"No."

Dan looked at Meyer and wondered what he ought to do. Turning to Stanton, he asked:

"Why is his head not sore like mine if you downed him last night?"

"I didn't give 'im nothin' but my bunch o' fives."

That explained it in a way that Dan could understand.

Meyer looked over at Stanton in a way that induced Dan to believe that he recognized him.

Slayton had sank down in a rocking-chair, and was going off into a drunken sleep. Meyer came over to Stanton and said:

"I have met you before, I believe?"

Stanton glared at him and replied:

"Yes, I believe so."

Meyer drew a pistol and leveled it at him, saying:

"You are my prisoner! You robbed me last night!"

"Yes, so I did," was the cool reply of the crook.

"Of course you did. You'll go with me to the station-house."

"No, I won't."

"Yes, you will."

"But I won't. What did yer lose last night?"

"A large pocketbook."

"Where did yer git it?"

Stanton looked him full in the face as he asked the question, and Dan saw him change color.

"Never mind where I got it," was the reply. "The question is where did you get it?"

"I got it from you. You got it from this gentleman, and I gave it back to him."

Meyer looked at Dan and quailed before him.

"He brought the wallet back to me," said Dan.

Meyer was staggered, and for a moment he did not know what to say. Dan gazed at him as if half inclined to spring at him and return the blow he had received the night before.

"Did Obed Malley send you after that wallet, Mr. Meyer?" he asked finally.

"There has been a mistake made somewhere," replied Meyer. "I was robbed after being knocked down, but it was not till two hours after you left me at Malley's. I never saw you again, and this is the first I have heard of—"

"I saw yer do it," said Stanton, "and I followed an' took it away from yer."

"Take that back, or I'll make a hole through you!" hissed Meyer, leveling the pistol at him.

Quick as a flash Dan knocked up the weapon, and the bullet went into the wall just over Stanton's shoulder.

The next moment the crook dealt Meyer a blow in the face that sent him reeling back over Slayton, who was serenely sleeping in the rocking-chair, and both went over on the floor together.

Ere Meyer could regain his feet Stanton had possessed himself of his pistol. Dan sprang forward to prevent him from using it; but he thrust it into his pocket and went at Meyer again with his natural weapons.

They were well matched, and fought around the room like a couple of prizefighters, till half the furniture in it was wrecked.

In the meantime the landlady, alarmed by the pistol shot, had hurried out for a policeman. Dan saw the officer coming and hastened to his own room, locking the door.

Whack! whack! whack! thump! went the blows in the other room.

"It's a case of dog eat dog," said Dan as he listened, "and I don't care which wins."

They were pounding away at each other when the officer came up to the room to arrest them.

"Hold up there now!" ordered the officer.

They paid no attention to him whatever, but went on with the fight.

Whack! went the locust over the head of Stanton, and the crook saw a million stars flash before his eyes as he staggered under the blow.

Then Meyer started to leave the room to make his escape, and the policeman grabbed him to detain him.

"I was fighting in self-defense," he said to the officer.

"Tell that to the judge," was the reply.

Whack!

Meyer struck the officer full in the face, hoping to down him, and thus have a chance to get away. But it did not down him. On the contrary, it so enraged the knight of the locust that he rained blow after blow on his head till he lay insensible at his feet.

Stanton sprang out of the window while Meyer was entertaining the officer, and landed on a shed, from which he leaped to the ground and made his exit to the street through the basement corridor, the cook and chambermaid being upstairs, listening to the fight in Slayton's room.

Meyer was subdued, and both he and Slayton were taken to the police station by the officer.

The landlady then went into the room and surveyed the wreck, at which she burst into tears.

"Oh, it's awful," she said. "I won't let him come back here any more."

"Slayton had nothing to do with the fight at all," said Dan to her. "It was the man who called here to see me, and the man who came home with Slayton."

Two hours later the officer came back to secure witnesses against the prisoner, and try to find out who the other man was so as to secure his arrest. The landlady told him that Dan McCrae could tell him something about it, and he went up to his room to see him.

Dan told him that he saw the fight, and that both men were crooks.

"Crooks! I thought this was a respectable house!"

"So it is, but they don't live here, and neither was ever in it before," and he then gave him the whole story as it is known to the reader.

Of course the officer gave him a summons to appear in court the next day and tell what he knew about the case.

On finding himself in a cell Meyer sent a messenger for Obed Malley. He hastened to the station to see him. The police knew that he was a man with a strong pull, and greeted him with as much deference as if he were the mayor of the city.

When he left the station he had arranged with the captain to hold the case back one day so as to give him time to fix things.

"I must look to getting Dan McCrae out of the way," he said to himself, as he left the station. "He would make a dead sure case against Gus if allowed to appear against him in court, and he means to make trouble for me, too, if he can. I'd give ten thousand dollars for that wallet."

He walked but two blocks while engaged in deep meditation.

Suddenly he exclaimed:

"I'll do it. It may make him stay away," and he turned his footsteps toward the boarding-house where Dan McCrae was living.

The servant-girl showed him up to Dan's room.

Dan sprang to his feet, and glared at him as he saw who his visitor was.

"How are you, Dan?" Malley said, taking a seat and removing his hat.

"I am well, sir, barring a very sore head caused by your friend Meyer," returned Dan.

"I have been to see Meyer, Dan," said Malley. "His head is battered all to pieces. I never saw such a bloody sight. They have removed him to the hospital, where they think his wounds may prove fatal. The officer who clubbed him has been arrested and locked up."

"Is it so bad as that?"

"Yes. He cracked his skull in two places. I am sorry for him. He has a double—a man who looks so much like him that he has had a great deal of trouble on account of him. I was on my way to see you when I heard that he was again in trouble. I have a note from a niece of mine up in Westchester stating that your sister is there and very ill, so if you want to see her you can come with me. I am going up on the next train."

"Mr. Malley, are you telling me the truth?" cried Dan, very much excited.

"Yes, Dan. I am telling you the straight truth. Come to my place and I'll show you the letter before we go up on the train."

Dan made haste to get off. He removed the bandage from his head and looked quite himself again, and in ten minutes they were on their way to Malley's place of business.

On reaching there Malley led the way down into the basement to a storage-room at the extreme rear end of the premises, where he gave Dan a stool, saying:

"Wait three or four minutes here for me," and left him there.

Some three or four minutes later three men entered the storage-room and seized him.

"You must drink this," said one, holding a bottle of brandy to his lips.

"Never!" he replied.

"Throw him down!" and a terrific struggle began.

CHAPTER VII.

THE "WORK OF FIENDS."

Dan made a stout resistance. He tried to draw his pocket knife and use it on his assailants. But they were too quick for him. They seized his arms and held him as if by a vise.

He soon found that he was as helpless as an infant in their hands, and that resistance was useless.

Still, he refused to drink of the contents of the bottle, believing that they had been drugged or poisoned.

They finally threw him on his back on the floor, held his nose and inserted the mouth of the bottle between his lips. By that means they forced nearly half the contents of the bottle down his throat.

"There now," said the man who had held the bottle. "That's good stuff, isn't it?"

They let him go and he rose to his feet with the bottle in his hand.

Quick as a flash he struck the wretch on the head with the bottle, felling him to the floor as if he had been shot through the heart.

"Take that for your share!" he said as the man went down.

"Hold him!" said one of the others, and they again seized him to hold him so as to prevent any further mischief.

By and by the brandy began to work on him, and he became reckless. They released him, and he at once took another drink from a bottle that was placed conveniently near to him.

"Where is Obed Malley?" he asked. "I am waiting for him. We are to go up to Westchester to see my sister. Tell him to hurry up. I can't wait here all day for him."

"Have another drink," said one of the men who had used him so very roughly. "He'll be here directly."

He took drink after drink till he was unable to stand on his feet. Then it was that Obed Malley came down to look at him.

"Ah, Meyer is safe now," he said as he saw him lying on the floor in a drunken stupor. Then he gave orders to his attendants to ply him with liquor as long as he would drink a drop.

When Dan awoke he was burning up with thirst. His throat was like a furnace.

He scrambled to his feet and glared around him at faces he didn't know.

"Have a drink," said a man. "I know how you feel," and he was given a glass of the strongest stuff in the house, which he swallowed at a gulp.

Of course he didn't go home that night nor the next day, nor did he appear at the court to tell what he knew about the fight in the boarding-house.

The officer called at the house for him, and the landlady told him that he had not been at home since the afternoon of the day before.

The result was that Meyer got off with a nominal fine for disorderly conduct, and came to Malley's place to see Dan.

"Have you seen anything of the wallet?" he asked of Malley.

"No, he didn't have it with him. We searched his clothes."

"Why not send a note to his landlady with his name signed to it?"

"She might know his handwriting," he replied.

"Yes, so she might, but it's not likely. I don't think he has ever had occasion to write to her. Just write a note asking her to look in his trunk and send by bearer a big wallet she will find there."

"No; I'll go there with him in a day or two and get him

to give it to me, or let me see it, or get it when he is too full to know anything about it. As long as I can keep him drunk I can do anything I please with him."

"Well, you know your own business best," remarked Meyer.

"Yes, I guess I do. He has given me more worry than I bargained for."

"How?"

"He knocked one of the men down with a bottle, hitting him on the head. That fellow has been out of his head ever since."

"The deuce!"

"Yes, and the worst of it is that he does nothing but repeat what he was doing at the time he was struck, telling those around him that Obed Malley says he must be filled full till he was blind drunk."

"Well, that is enough to worry any one."

"Yes."

"But what are you going to do with him—McCrae?"

"I'll keep him drunk till I get that wallet or he dies."

"But if he should die, would you be any better off? His property would fall into other hands and if the papers in that wallet are worth anything to you I don't see but that you would be even worse off than you are now."

"You are right. I'll keep him drunk as long as he lives if I don't get hold of that wallet."

Dan was now once more in the grip of the demon of drink, and it looked as if he would drink himself to death. Obed Malley was more than kind to him in his treatment of him. He gave him all he wanted to eat and drink, as well as a place to sleep.

He was trying to sober him up to take him over to his room, in the hope of being able to get the wallet from him, when a detective came in and arrested him.

"Hello! What's that for?" Malley demanded of the detective.

"He is the man who hit Smith on the head with a bottle," replied the detective. "Smith is ruined for life—an idiot, and this man is the cause of it."

"Why, there isn't a word of truth in that yarn," said Malley. "Smith was hurt by falling down the stairs."

"I have got all the facts in the case, Mr. Malley. He hit him with a bottle."

Malley was worried worse than ever, for if they locked Dan up and let him get sober, he would tell the whole story in court.

"I'll go with you and see if I can't bail him out," and he went along with him. On the way he intimated that the detective could make more money by letting him go than by arresting him.

But the detective did not seem to either understand the hint, or else was not inclined to be bribed. He landed his prisoner in the police cell, and the key was turned in the ponderous lock.

Malley went to the private residence of the judge, and tried to get an order from him to the captain at the station-house to release the prisoner on the recognizance of Obed Malley.

But when the judge learned the nature of Smith's injury he would not give the order, even though one of his staunchest friends had asked for it.

The result was that Obed Malley had to return to his place of business, and tell his men what to swear to in court when Dan told his story.

Dan slept till morning on the hard cot in the cell, and when he awoke he didn't know where he was. He got up on his feet, and stood at the grating in the door, calling for a drink.

The sergeant came to him, and said:

"See here, if you don't keep quiet you'll be put in a straight jacket."

"Where am I?" Dan asked.

"In a cell in a police station."

"What have I done?"

"You nearly killed a man."

"In a fight?"

"Yes."

He couldn't recollect having been in any fight at all, though he tried ever so hard. But his thirst was so great that he couldn't think of anything else.

"Give me a drink!" he begged of the sergeant.

"You can't get anything but water here," remarked the sergeant. "This is a temperance house."

"But I'll die if I don't get something to drink!" groaned Dan. "In God's name give me some whisky or brandy."

"You can't have it, young man. You've had too much already. You want to let liquor alone and sober up."

Dan yelled in his agony. He had never suffered so before. His limbs trembled as if he had the palsy, and huge drops of cold perspiration trickled down his face.

The police surgeon came and said he was threatened with delirium tremens, and at once took measures to stave off the attack. To do so he was removed to a hospital under the charge of an officer.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN THE HOSPITAL.

Let us now go back to the police station where Meyer and Slayton had been taken after their arrest. The reader will recollect that Stanton, the crook, made his escape from the boarding-house while the policeman was arresting Meyer.

The police failed to find him, and Meyer and Slayton were fined by the judge for disorderly conduct. Malley had caused it to be impossible for Dan McCrae to appear against them, hence the light punishment they received.

As soon as he was out of the clutches of the police, Meyer saw that his future prospects would be blighted forever if the charge of robbery was made against him. To find Stanton, the crook, and bribe him to deny the charge was the first thing for him to do.

"Slayton must know him," he said to himself, "and I'll get his address from him."

He waited for Slayton, made a bee-line for the nearest saloon as soon as he was free, and asked him where he could find Stanton.

"I don't know," he said, looking at him in a suspicious sort of way. "Why do you ask?"

"Because I want to see him and apologize for my conduct toward him yesterday."

"Oh, that's all right. You and I got the worst of it, and so I think he'll be satisfied as it is."

"But I am not satisfied. I want to act like a gentleman toward him."

"What was the row about, anyway?"

"It was the liquor we all had been drinking."

"Yes, I suppose it was. But I never met you before. Didn't McCrae bring you into my room?"

"Yes."

"Well, I didn't know that he ever drank anything."

"Well, he doesn't now. But the rest of us did. Can you tell me where I would be likely to run across Stanton?"

"No, I cannot. I don't know much about him, though I have been acquainted with him for years."

"Well, I'd like very much to see him. If you see him tell him I wish to see him and apologize for my conduct."

"I will do so. Won't you come in and have a drink with me?"

"Yes—don't care if I do," and they went in and had a glass of brandy each.

Slayton did not really know that Stanton was a crook, though he had known him for years. He had always believed that he was an agent of a New York house, as the latter had so told him on one occasion.

But Meyer was not satisfied to let the matter rest that way. He must see Stanton by all means and make himself safe with him. To do that he resolved to shadow Slayton and see if he did not meet him somewhere in the city.

He did so, and in the evening saw him and Stanton meet in a saloon over on the east side of town.

Walking boldly up to him, he held out his hand, saying:

"Shake! You are a lucky dog."

Stanton laughed and shook hands with him, saying:

"It's all right, pard."

"Well, I didn't know. I wanted to see you, and make it all right. I was too hasty yesterday, and tried to play a bluff game on you."

"The bluff didn't work though, did it?"

"Well, no—not much, except on me. I was jugged and you skipped out."

Stanton laughed, and suggested that they have a drink at his expense.

They drank together, and then Meyer said to the crook:

"I want to have a talk with you on business, if our friend here will excuse us."

Slayton said he would excuse them, and then they left the saloon together, arm in arm.

During that walk Meyer discovered that Stanton knew all about him as a rising young politician.

"You were right when you said that I was the man who had taken that wallet from McCrae," he said. "There are papers in that wallet for which I will give one thousand dollars. I had them for nothing that night, but you got them away from me. Of course, we understand each other now, and can stand by each other when in trouble. Do you think you can get that wallet out of McCrae's room?"

"I think I can, pard."

"It is somewhere in his room, and if you will get it and bring it to me I'll give you \$1,000 in cold cash."

"Do you happen to have a tenner with you now?" Stanton asked.

"Yes, of course," and he drew a ten-dollar bill from his pocket and handed it to him.

He then told him to come to Obed Malley's place any evening he wanted to see him.

"But," he added, "don't let him know or suspect that you and I have any business together."

They parted, and then Meyer hurried to Malley's place, where he saw Dan lying in the rear room in the basement, in a beastly state of intoxication.

"If I can get him down into the gutter once more," said Malley to him, "I'll have him just where I want him. I could turn him loose now and he'd keep up the spree indefinitely."

Stanton made an attempt to enter Dan's room the next evening, but made a failure of it. A dog in the house gave the alarm, and he had to skip out.

Then he tried it again several nights in succession, but without success.

In the meantime Slayton was forced to leave the house by the landlady, on account of his drinking habits.

Stanton then disguised himself and applied for board and lodging there, making choice of the room Slayton had left.

While these changes were going on Dan was in the hospital, engaged with incipient tremens, which the doctors assisted him to stave off. He was but a wreck of his former self, pale, trembling and haggard-looking.

Seeing a policeman constantly by his bedside, Dan asked him why he was there.

"Don't you know you are a prisoner?" the officer asked.

Dan opened wide his eyes and stared at him.

"No, I did not know it," he replied. "What have I done?"

"Did you not hit a man on the head with a bottle and knock him down?"

He recollected the incident, and said that he did.

"Well, that's what you are arrested for. That man was made an idiot by that blow on the head."

"My God! Is that so!"

"Yes. He is here in this hospital now, but the doctors say it's a hopeless case, and that he will have to go to a lunatic asylum."

Dan groaned way down in his soul, for he did not like to have such a burden as that falling upon him.

"I want to see him," he said to the officer. "Will they let me see him?"

"You must ask the doctor. If he says you may I shall not make any objections."

The doctor gave his consent, and in the afternoon Dan was led into the room where the man Smith was lying in a straight jacket, under charge of an attendant.

As soon as Smith saw him he cried out:

"There he is! Seize him! Hold 'im! The boss says we must make him drink at least half in this bottle. Hold him still now. Open your mouth, I say. You won't? Throw him down on the floor, boys. Hold his nose now. Ha, ha, ha! that's the way. He has got half of it, anyhow. Now you may let him up. Good brandy that, eh? Ha, ha, ha!" and the idiotic laugh rang through the room and out into the corridors, making even the attendants shudder as they listened to it.

CHAPTER IX.

THE LAWYER'S RUSE.

Dan listened to the man's raving with amazement, and then asked the officer:

"Did you hear what he said?"

"Yes. He talks that way all the time. He has gone clean daft."

"Can you remember what he said when he saw me?"

"Yes."

"Well, don't forget. My God, but this is terrible."

"Yes, indeed."

"I am ready to go back now."

He was taken back to his quarters, and a day or two later the doctor told him he was well enough to go.

"But don't drink any more, young man. Another spree like that will wind you up."

"Thanks, doctor. I did not drink with my own accord," he said, as he left with the officer.

On the way the officer told him that Obed Malley had been untiring in his efforts to settle the matter for him and keep it out of court.

"I don't want anything to do with him," said Dan.

"Why, he is the best friend you have in the world."

"What do you know about it?" Dan asked.

"I only know what he has been trying to do," was the reply.

When the case came before the police justice a lawyer came up to Dan and said:

"I am a lawyer, and having heard of your case I want to defend you free of charge."

"I am able to pay you, sir," replied Dan.

"I don't want any pay. I want to get you out on as little bail as possible and then get you clear in the end, because I believe you are innocent of any intention to do wrong."

"Very well."

"Do you leave the case with me?"

"Yes."

The lawyer, whose name was Kennedy, then talked with the judge a few minutes, waived examination, and gave bail for \$1,000 for his appearance before the Grand Jury.

"One thousand bail," said the lawyer to Dan, in a whisper. "I can get that easy enough for you."

"I can get it myself," said Dan. "I can put up the cash."

"But it would be better to have some good name on your bond," suggested Kennedy.

"I can put up the cash, and don't want anybody to go on my bond for me," and the matter was settled that way.

"Now I can arrange to have the whole matter settled out of court so it need never come to trial," said the lawyer.

"But I want it to come to trial," said Dan, "and the sooner it is done the better I will like it."

"If you do it may go hard with you," remarked the lawyer.

"I am going to take the chances on that," said Dan, as he came out of the court house.

"I am going to have a dinner. Won't you join me?"

"I am very anxious to go home and change my clothes," said Dan.

"You need a good square meal with a cup of strong coffee to quiet your nerves," said Kennedy. "Come on," and he took hold of him and led the way to a first-class restaurant not far from the court-room.

There he ordered dinner for two with a bottle of wine.

"I don't care to drink any wine," said Dan.

"I wouldn't advise you to," returned Kennedy. "I always drink wine at dinner. It agrees with me. I'll tell the waiter not to bring but one bottle. Will you have coffee at once?"

"Yes, if you please."

The lawyer arose from the table and went after the waiter to whom he said, slipping a coin in his hand:

"Give my young friend two tablespoonfuls of brandy in his coffee."

The waiter bowed and proceeded to carry out his instructions to the letter.

Dan had eaten a few mouthfuls, when he took a swallow of the coffee.

Of course he detected the brandy in it.

His eyes blazed, and the next moment he sprang to his feet and dashed the cup of coffee into Kennedy's face.

"Take that, you double-dyed villain!"

Kennedy sprang to his feet, blinded by the hot coffee, and groped around for a napkin.

Dan walked out of the restaurant, and, seeing a carriage standing in front of it, sprang into it, saying to the driver:

"Take me to No. —, on — street as quick as you can!"

The carriage dashed off up the street, and Dan lay back on the cushions groaning:

"My God!" he exclaimed. "I would rather be dead than get down in the gutter again. They are trying to get me there and keep me down. I am going home and fight this battle over again."

When he reached home the landlady and chambermaid both greeted him with great cordiality.

"You have been ill," said the landlady.

"Yes. I have been in the hospital. I want quiet and rest."

"You shall have both. Mr. Slayton has left, and a very quiet gentleman occupies his room now."

"I am glad to hear that."

He locked himself in his room and lay down on the bed to suffer in silence, till the flame started by the brandy in his coffee had burnt itself out.

"Kennedy went back there, and told the waiter to put it in my coffee," he said. "Obed Malley got him to do that. I am not going to drink anything hereafter till I know what it is. Why do they want to keep me in the gutter? It must be to keep me from finding my sister. Oh, if she were here I could fight this battle better, and feel stronger. We are all that's left of the whole family."

It was a bitter, bitter struggle, but he held bravely to it, and would not go out of his room even to go down to supper. The meal was brought up to him. When he had eaten it he went to bed again.

He awoke about midnight, and heard a slight noise in his room. Rising on his elbow, he saw a man on his knees in front of his big trunk—the one Joe Nisbet had left to him.

Under his pillow was a small revolver. He reached for it and got it.

Taking aim at the back of the man's head, he fired.

A yell that would have excited the envy of a Comanche Indian burst from the burglar, who sprang up and darted out of the room as if the ghost of his grandfather was after him.

CHAPTER X.

THE CYNICAL OLD BACHELOR.

The report of the pistol and the yells of the burglar alarmed everybody in the boarding-house.

There was a light in every room within one minute after the shot was fired, and heads popped out of half-opened doors inquiring what the trouble was.

"There was a man in my room trying to open my trunk," said Dan, "and I shot at him."

"Did you kill him?" one of the boarders asked.

"I guess not, as he is not here," he replied.

Several of the male boarders came into his room to look around. Dan told them where the burglar was when he fired, saying:

"I could see him by the moonlight which comes through the window there. I aimed at his head, and must have hit him, or he wouldn't have yelled as he did."

"Ah! You didn't hit at all!" exclaimed one of the gentlemen. "Here's where the bullet went into the wall," and he pointed to a bullet hole in the wall about a foot above the trunk.

They all rushed to look at it, and wondered what made the burglar yell if he had not been hit.

"Maybe the bullet went through him," said one.

"Nonsense!" said another. "When a man is shot through he doesn't get up and run away somewhere else to die. He dies on the spot."

"The pistol is too small to send a ball through a man," remarked Dan, exhibiting the pistol to some of the boarders.

They looked at it and handed it back to him.

One of the boarders was a cynical old bachelor, who had

a room on the opposite side of the corridor from Dan's; he turned to one of the others and whispered:

"There was no burglar here. He fired that pistol just to make himself a hero."

"But we heard the yell," returned the boarder.

"Well, can't he yell as well as fire a pistol?"

"Yes, I suppose he could, but I don't believe he is built that way."

"Bah!" and the cynic went back to his room, followed by two or three others who accepted his theory of the shooting.

But he had not been five minutes in his room ere he missed his watch. It was not in the usual place. He sprang up to look for it. It was not anywhere about.

Then he felt in his pockets.

His purse was gone, too, and he awoke to the fact that he had been cleaned out by a thief.

"I've been robbed!" he cried, in loud tones. "I've been robbed! Don't let anybody leave the house!" and he raised as great a rumpus as the pistol-shot did.

The boarders made a rush for his room, and when they found out what had happened they hastened back to their own quarters to see if they had lost anything themselves.

Then it was made plain that somebody had gone through the house and taken everything that was of any value. Ladies had lost watches, locketts, rings, and other valuables, while the men had suffered in purses, scarf-pins, and watches and chains.

But Dan had lost nothing. His watch and chain were hanging in their usual place, and had not been disturbed at all.

"You never lost anything, did you, McCrae?" the cynical old bachelor asked.

"No, nothing but a bullet," was the reply.

"What was the use of losing that? You need not have raised all that muss just to blind us."

Dan looked at him in dumfounded amazement. He could hardly believe his ears.

"You do Mr. McCrae a great wrong, Mr. Hines," said the landlady in a mild, protesting sort of way.

"Bah!"

Dan turned to two of the boarders and asked:

"Will you two do me the favor to search my room—trunks and all?"

"I don't wish to do anything of the kind," said one of them.

"But it's to save my good name that I ask you to do so," he returned.

They searched the room thoroughly and reported that nothing not belonging to him could be found there.

"Bah!" said the cynic.

"Has anyone seen the man in the next room?" one of the boarders asked.

No one had seen him.

They made a rush for his room.

The door was locked.

Two of them forced it open by main strength, and there found on the bed, tied up in a handkerchief, nearly all the missing valuables. Blood was shown on the white bedclothes and on the handkerchief.

The window was open, showing how the thief had escaped by way of the roof of the small extension in the rear of the house.

"Here they are! And here's blood, too! He did hit him after all!" and the delighted boarders grasped Dan's hand and shook it heartily.

"I take it all back," said Hines, the cynic, offering his hand to Dan.

"You can't take it back, sir," said Dan, refusing to take the

proffered hand. "All you can do is to acknowledge yourself a cynical old slandering fool."

"Eh! What! By the great——"

"Keep cool. You are an old slanderous crank—if not a cowardly rascal," said Dan, interrupting him. "If there is a thief in this house, since the one I shot has left, you are the one."

"Ough! Oof! Let me choke the young rascal. Get out of my way!" and the infuriated old bachelor made frantic efforts to get at him. Dan stood unmoved near the door, while the other boarders tried to quiet Hines.

"Let him alone," he said to the boarders. "Leave him alone. A man who would do what he has done to-night wouldn't throw a bootjack at a mewling cat."

They let go of him, and he stood glaring at the youth.

Dan held his pistol in his hand, a fact that kept the irate old bachelor at a respectful distance, and looked at him.

"You are a malicious, slandering old fool," repeated Dan, "and a rank coward at that. Had you seen that burglar in your room you would have jumped out of bed, fell on your knees, and implored him to take all but spare your life. Bah! And yet you talk about others in a sneering, cynical way that is the quintessence of meanness."

The old bachelor could not stand it any longer. He turned and made a break for his room, where he locked himself in and did not come down to his breakfast the next morning till after all the boarders had gone away.

Stanton had taken the room under the name of Colgate, and had brought little or no baggage with him. What few things he did leave gave no clew as to who he was, or who were his friends.

The fact that he had gone through all the other rooms before coming to his convinced Dan that he was not after the wallet any more than anything else.

Yet he decided the next day to take the wallet and place it in the safe of some bank. After some little thought over the matter he took it to the bank where his money was deposited, and asked if it could not be kept there for him.

The cashier wrapped it in strong paper, wrote his name on it, and put it away for him in the great vault of the bank.

"I guess they will have a sweet time getting it from me now," he said to himself as he came out. "When I have time I am going to have a good lawyer look at the papers and tell me what they are good for. Kennedy was sent to entrap me, I am sure, and he came near doing it. I can't understand it unless it is to keep me from finding my sister. Obed Malley wants to keep me drunk all the time, and that's because he knows where she is and does not want me to find her. I am going to find her, though, if I have to hire the best detective in the city to search for her. But I've got to see a lawyer and have him defend me in this Smith case. I am sorry he got so badly hurt, but he got no more than he deserved. I am not going to let them punish me for defending myself if I can prevent it."

He did not have time to go to a lawyer that day, as other business called him to see a merchant on Broadway whom he knew. The merchant was not in, and as he was coming away he met Gus Meyer at the door.

CHAPTER XI.

A BATTLE AGAINST ODDS.

"Hello, McCrae," exclaimed Meyer, extending his hand to him.

Dan looked him full in the face, and made no motion to take his hand.

"Oh, you feel angry at me, do you?" he said. "I really don't think you have any reason to."

"I am not angry," returned Dan. "I have no feeling other than contempt for you and all others of your stripe."

Two of the employees of the store heard the remark, and the young lawyer and rising politician made a show of righteous indignation.

"What do you mean, sir?" he demanded.

"Do you want me to say what I mean?" Dan asked.

"Yes, and in as loud tones as possible," was the reply.

"Well, when the Smith case is called I'll tell what I mean and under oath, too, so that all the papers will have it. You are beneath the notice of any honest man. No honest man who knows you would associate with you."

"That's actionable!"

"Is it? Sue me for slander and I'll repeat it in court and give my reasons for doing so."

Meyer went away vowing he would begin an action without delay, and Dan went on to his quarters, where he found a note from Obed Malley awaiting him:

"My dear Dan: I have just heard that you had shot a burglar in your room. One of my employees reports to me that he overheard two men talking about fixing you for it. He says he can point out one of them almost any evening. Perhaps if you come up to my place this evening and go with him he may be able to save you from serious injury, if not from death itself. Anything I can do for you can be commanded at a moment's notice.

Yours,

"Obed Malley."

"Lord, what cheek!" exclaimed Dan when he had finished reading the note. "He would have me led into some trap or den where I would never come out alive again. I'd have been in the gutter yet had I not been arrested for knocking that man on the head. Oh, God! I've got to fight this battle all alone! If Nellie was with me she could help me with her sisterly love. I can't even go to work now, for I must hunt for her. I must devote all my time to that one object of my life. Good old Jed Nisbet did me a greater service than he thought when he left me his money, for I can now search for her as long as it will last. Obed Malley knows where Nellie is. I am as well satisfied of that fact as I am that I live. He could tell me if he wished, but for some inscrutable reason he will not do so. I know of no way to compel him to tell me. My God! what is it that hinders me from killing that man? What has he not done to me and mine?"

When he ate his supper Dan went back up to his room and sat down to look over some of the effects of Nisbet which he had not yet had time to inspect.

Two hours passed, and a knock on his door startled him.

"Come in!"

The door opened and the servant came in to announce that a man in a carriage in front of the house wished to see him.

"Who is he?"

"I don't know."

"Well, tell him to meet me in the parlor."

The girl went down and saw the man in the carriage.

The man came in, and Dan saw that he was a man he had seen in Malley's place.

"Mr. Malley sent a carriage for you. He wants to see you," said the man.

"I won't go to his place. I'll never go there again," said Dan.

The man seemed disappointed, and urged him to go. He shook his head.

"Then go down to the — House, and he will meet you there," suggested the man.

"I'll do that," said Dan. "Just wait till I go upstairs and lock my trunk," and he went up to his room, where he placed the little revolver in his pocket before leaving the room.

On entering the carriage, Dan held the pistol in his hand to be ready in case of another attack.

They rode a couple of blocks when the carriage stopped, and another man got in and sat alongside of Dan. The carriage moved off again, and ere they had gone two more blocks the newcomer grabbed him by the arms, while the other clapped a wet handkerchief to his face.

But they had not seen the little pistol—nor even suspected its presence.

Crack!

Crack!

Crack!

It was a six-shooter—a self-cocker, and it could be fired rapidly.

"My God!" groaned the first man. "I am shot!"

"So am I!" groaned the other, making a frantic effort to get out of the carriage.

Dan struggled as hard as he could, but the fumes of the powerful drug overcame him, and he sank down unconscious in the seat.

Two policemen heard the shots, and saw a man make a wild break to get away from the carriage when he got out. They suspected foul play of some kind, and made a dash—one to arrest the man and the other to stop the carriage.

The driver was too much terrified to go on when ordered to halt, and in another moment the policeman had the team in charge.

"What's the matter inside there, coachee?"

"Divil a wan o' me knows, sorr," replied the driver.

He opened the door and saw two men lying against each other, one groaning as if in great pain, the other still, as if dead.

A crowd quickly collected, and the other officer came up with the man he had arrested.

"Take 'em to the station-house," said the second officer, and the carriage was driven there at once.

Dan was taken out utterly insensible, and the other man was half dead from a wound in the side made by a small bullet. The man who was arrested on the street as he attempted to escape from the carriage was wounded also, and bleeding profusely.

The police surgeons were sent for, and the result was that three were sent to the hospital to be treated.

Dan was not brought out from under the influence of the drug till near morning, and then he was too sick to be able to tell anything about what had happened to him.

But the man who was shot in the side was told that he could not live—that the chances were dead against him. They urged him to tell how the trouble happened, but he would not say anything about it.

At last Dan told what he knew about it, and a wild sensation grew out of it. The other wounded man denied the story in toto. Said he:

"McCrae is a lunatic and ought to be locked up. He has an insane idea that people are all trying to rob him. When I got into the carriage to join my friend that young lunatic drew his gun and began to shoot. It's a wonder he didn't kill us both."

"Did Obed Malley send you or your friend after McCrae?" an officer asked.

"He didn't send me. I don't know whether he sent Casey or not. Ask him."

CHAPTER XII.

DARK DAYS AGAIN.

Dan was now again in the hospital and under arrest. Obed Malley was a man of too much influence for any story coming from a poor youth to do him any harm. The letter from him to Dan, which the police found and read, only showed that he had none but the kindest feelings toward him.

"For some unaccountable reason," said Malley to an officer, "poor Dan, whom I have befriended in many ways on account of my friendship for his father when he was alive, has an idea that I am his enemy. Why, only a week ago he was here living and sleeping on the premises free of charge, as I can prove by all the employees. I am quite sure he is off his base. He ought to be locked up and kept from doing further mischief. It's a wonder he did not kill both those men."

"But the doctors agree in saying that he was insensible when brought to the hospital, made so by the use of chloroform and some other powerful drug," remarked the officer.

"Yes, I have heard so," returned Malley. "Of course I know nothing about that. I am the best friend he has in the world to-day."

An investigation was made by the police officials, and Dan told his story—even to the seizure of himself in Malley's place and the terrible effect that followed.

Malley laughed when he was told what Dan had said, and remarked:

"There were two men who were with him when he struck down Smith. You can talk with them and get their version of the affair."

The two employees denied that they had forced Dan to drink, and claimed that he hit Smith on the head with the bottle because he would not let him have any more brandy.

That was the story they were both going to swear to when they appeared in court against him. The reporters published all they could get of the case, and Dan was thus posted as to what he would have to meet in open court.

"Three to one," he said, as he laid down the paper in the hospital where he was still held a prisoner, "I have got to fight this thing single-handed, with Obed Malley to back up my accusers. I wonder I don't blow out what little brains I have, and be at rest. They may prove me to be a lunatic after all, and get me sent to an asylum. But I would not mind even that if I only knew that Nellie was alive and well."

The investigation was going against him, as he had nothing to corroborate his story but the drugged handkerchief, which was found in the carriage. The two men who were shot were not of the best characters in the world.

One of them had a decidedly shady reputation, and he was the worst hurt. His life was hanging in the balance. If he died without changing his story it would go hard with Dan, notwithstanding his bad reputation.

At last, when he was told that he would die, he said that Dan had shot him, and that he was holding the handkerchief to Dan's face when the shot was fired. But ere he could say more he was struck with a paroxysm of pain, from which he never rallied. He died that night, and Malley's name was still unconnected with the crime save by Dan's accusation.

But the public sentiment was now turning in his favor, and the end of the investigation was the exoneration of Dan and the holding of the other man.

When he came out he was met by several people who wanted to shake his hand and congratulate him. One of them was a well-known reformer, who said to him:

"I have read of your struggle to save yourself, and believed it my duty to come to you and say something to encourage

you. Come to my meeting to-morrow night, and tell your story, and I believe you will find a host of friends to stand by you. It's a hard thing to fight the battle alone."

"Yes, indeed, and had it not been that I had a motive as strong as the desire to live I could not have pulled myself out of the gutter as I did. I will go to your meeting to-morrow night, but I don't care to say anything. I never made a speech in my life, and don't know that I could."

The reformer went away, and that evening he told his audience in a large hall that a young man with a strange story to tell would be there on the next night.

The papers made mention of the meeting, and gave Dan's name as the young man.

The hall was packed to suffocation, and when Dan was pointed out to them as the young man who shot two men in a carriage for trying to chloroform him, the people craned their necks to look at him. The reformer spoke eloquently for half an hour and then introduced him. They greeted him kindly as he was pulled out of his seat by the reformer.

"I never made a speech in my life," he said, tremblingly, "but I want to ask you to help me find my sister. I'll tell you how I came to lose her," and then he went on to relate the story of his life. He forgot that a thousand people were listening to him—forgot himself—everything but the terrible struggle to pull himself out of the gutter and find that sweet young sister again.

No orator ever told a story more effectively, more eloquently. Men and women cried as they listened, and when he told how he had been seized and made drunk again when he went to Obed Malley's place in the hope of finding some trace of his sister, the storm of indignation that broke loose was appalling. Then he told how a sweet girl friend of his sister's had come to him one day when he had been thrown into the gutter by Obed Malley and spoke kind words to him.

"Her words ring in my ears to-night," he said, "and her sweet face passes before me whenever I close my eyes in sleep. She was the angel who spoke to me in the deeps of intoxication, and the gratitude of my heart will go out to her in whatever part of the world she may be."

When the meeting was over, hundreds crowded forward to take him by the hand. Among them was a beautiful woman, who said:

"Dan, don't you know me?"

He looked at her for nearly a minute, and then exclaimed:

"Emily Rives! You are the angel I spoke of! Oh, how glad I am to see you!" and he grasped her hand and kissed it.

"Oh, Dan, I am the happiest girl in the world!" she replied, tears of joy in her eyes. "I did not know that you were even alive! And you have grown so manly, too! I had seen your name in the papers, but did not dream that it was you. Papa is dead, and I am living in Brooklyn. If you find Nellie, bring her to me, and she shall have a home with me, and a sister's love."

Dan shed tears and broke down completely. It was such a relief to him to hear kind words.

He promised to call on her, and then started back to his home on foot.

"Here!" said a man, rushing up to him. "We are not going to let our best speaker walk home. Get in my carriage here, and I'll set you down at your door."

"Thank you," said Dan, turning and entering the carriage, the use of which had been so freely tendered him.

"You never made a speech before to-night," said the man, "but it was a wonderful speech for the first time."

"I don't know how I came to talk so long," said Dan. "I

forgot myself in a few moments, and have no idea what I said."

"It was a wonderful speech," repeated the other. "I never heard anything like it in all my life," and as he spoke he dealt him a blow on the side of his head that laid him senseless on the seat of the carriage.

CHAPTER XIII.

A COMPACT OF CRIME.

In a small rear room of one of Obed Malley's gilded palaces sat two men one evening after the shooting of the two men in the carriage.

They were engaged in conversation, and a half-filled bottle and two glasses were on the table in front of them. Both had flushed faces from the effect of the wine they had been drinking.

One was Obed Malley himself, and the other that rising young politician, Gus Meyer.

They conversed in tones but little above whispers, and their heads frequently rubbed together when they were not drinking.

"It is an ugly scrape," said Malley, "and he may do me no end of injury if he couples my name with the affair."

"If the two wounded men stick to their denial he can do you no harm," said Meyer.

"But will they stick?"

"Yes, I think they will."

"But if they should give the thing away I'd be in a bad fix."

"Not so bad as you think. There are a class of people who think a liquor seller capable of any sort of crime. Those people you care nothing about. Your friends, who know you, will not believe such a thing of you, and they will mould public opinion very rapidly."

"There's no use of trying any more games on him, Gus," whispered Malley to the young politician. "I know enough about courts and the law to see where my danger lies. This case must not get into the courts, nor the case of Smith either. He can swear to so much that can have a certain amount of corroboration, that I would be ruined forever in the public mind. Were he put permanently out of the way I would fear nothing, and if you can have the matter attended to there are \$10,000 that you can draw upon toward the expenses of the job."

Gus Meyer gazed at the bottle in front of him for some minutes ere he made any reply to the suggestion. Then he spoke up, and said:

"Leave it to me, and I'll see what can be done."

"Very well. See to it that he does not get into court with any of the cases. You can't depend on keeping him in the gutter. He has more nerve and will power than any man I ever knew, and that is saying a great deal."

"I didn't dream that he would shoot," said Meyer.

"I am really afraid of him when he is sober, and don't want to come into personal contact with him any more. I am sure that he has tumbled to the fact that I have tried to keep him in the gutter, and that has made him very bitter toward me. He has always believed that I was the cause of his father's failure, and once accused me of it. These things will have their effect on the public mind, and——"

"How about that wallet?" Meyer asked.

"It was one belonging to Joel Nisbet, who was a confidential clerk in a real estate office, and in the course of some business transaction he became possessed of some important papers belonging to me. I tried to get them from him—even had his

trunk opened in his absence by false keys—but could not succeed. "He had them in that wallet, and once threatened me with utter ruin to my face. I would rather anybody else in the world got hold of them than Dan McCrea. From the fact that he has not yet let me hear from them convinces me that he does not know that they are in the wallet, hence I want him put out of the way before he does. As long as I could keep him in the gutter I had nothing to fear from him. Now you understand the whole case. Just get him out of my pathway and your fortune is made, Gus Meyer."

"I'll see that he shall not long remain a menace to you. I have a grudge against him myself, and would like to get a little satisfaction out of it. But do you know where his sister is?"

"That has nothing to do with the case at all. You go to work on the presumption that no such person is living, and I'll be satisfied."

"All right."

Three days later Gus Meyer was seated at the same table with another man, whom we have seen before.

He was a man whose countenance was not calculated to win the confidence of a reader of human anatomy. His name was Stanton.

"This time we want to pay off old scores with a vengeance," said Meyer to him. "He has turned the tables on us and left us in the lurch."

"Yes, an' clipped a piece off my ear with that little gun of his," said Stanton, whose left ear was still inflamed, though plastered over, where the bullet from Dan's pistol had cut away the top of it as he was kneeling before his trunk while searching for the wallet he had been sent to get.

"Yes, we both have scores to settle with him. Now if you can disguise yourself get a carriage and act as driver. We can put up a job that will get away with him without any trouble whatever."

"But they can trace the team back to us," said Stanton, shaking his head.

"No. We can have a paint ready to put on the horses which we can wash off after we have done the job," replied Meyer. "I have arranged just how we can work it in perfect safety. Do you know how to drive?"

"Yes."

"Enough then. We can work the thing without any trouble."

"But is there any boodle in it for me?"

"Yes, a cool thousand."

Stanton silently reached out his hand and grasped that of the young politician.

It was a compact about which it was not necessary to speak with the mouth. They could understand each other very well without a word being spoken.

"Do you know where you can hire a team for an evening?" Meyer asked.

"Yes, I think I do."

"Well, see to it—hire one for this evening, and let's take a ride so as to familiarize ourselves with it."

"Yes, and try the paint on the horses," added Stanton.

They took the ride, and then bargained for the turnout again the next evening.

On this second trip they painted several large white spots on the two horses, and drove them up to and through Central Park.

They saw that the plan would work, so they turned their attention to getting up efficient disguises for themselves.

That was easily done, and soon had just what they wanted.

At last Meyer saw it announced in the papers that Dan was to be at a temperance meeting that evening and tell his story.

He hastened to tell Obed Malley, and call his attention to the notice in the papers.

The liquor dealer turned pale, and said:

"I'd give any amount of money to keep that fellow from going to that meeting."

"I don't know of any way to keep him from going," returned Meyer. "To do that would incur a great risk. I am going to the meeting, and I am quite sure that it will be the last one he will ever attend himself."

"He will do me no end of mischief," said Malley.

"I don't think so. You overrate those things, I think."

"Well, maybe I do, but I don't like to have a man attack me in a place where I can't reply."

"No, but wait. It's his last meeting. Good-by," and they shook hands as they parted.

CHAPTER XIV.

VILLAINOUS WORK.

When the villain saw Dan sink down in the seat, he knew that he was unconscious. He at once proceeded to search his clothes, and took from them a purse, watch, and chain, and some loose change. These he transferred to his own pocket, and then put his head out of the window of the carriage to say to the driver:

"Drive to the Astoria Ferry, please."

"All right, sir," responded the driver, and the carriage was driven toward 92d street and East River.

There they crossed the little ferry over to Astoria, where they drove up parallel to the shore, where they reached a spot with no people in view.

They stopped, and the body of Dan McCrae was taken out, borne to the water, and cast into it.

It was very dark, but they knew that the tide was running out at a swift rate.

"Now let's go back to Long Island City Ferry," said the man who had dealt the blow to Dan McCrae, in low tones.

He got back into the carriage and was driven away with regular speed, as though nothing else was to be done that night.

It took them over an hour to reach the Thirty-fourth street ferry, where they crossed over to New York.

Then they stopped at a watering trough to wash the paint off the horses. Stanton did that job, while Meyer stood on the watch for passers by.

The paint was washed off in a few minutes, and then they drove leisurely back to the stable where the team belonged, gave it in charge of the owner, and came away.

"That will forever remain a mystery of East River," remarked Meyer, "if the stiff is ever found."

"Just as I would have it," said his companion. "But I hope it will never be found."

"So do I. It is not pleasant to read of such things in the papers."

"No. But we have to do that sometimes. My ear won't hurt me so much after this, I guess."

"No," and a quiet laugh followed the admission.

Gus Meyer went to his quarters accompanied by Stanton. He there gave the latter the amount agreed upon for his share of the work.

Stanton then went away, and that was the last seen of him that night.

Meyer went to his bed feeling certain that he had removed a youth from his pathway who might have been extremely annoying to him had he lived much longer.

"Obed Malley will now be under obligations to me," he said to himself, "so that he won't dare to refuse to back me up to the fullest extent possible. I didn't get the wallet, though, and I am sorry for that. I am satisfied that the papers he wants to get are worth a good deal to him. If I had them in my possession I'd hold on to them, to be used if he showed a disposition to go back on me. One is never satisfied of his safety till he has the proof of it in his hands. If I get a grip on him I'll be sure of my future in this city, for he has the strongest pull of any man in it."

The next day the young politician went down to Obed Malley's place and saw his backer in his little office.

They whispered together for some minutes, when Meyer said:

The wallet was not on him. Here are his watch and purse," and he produced those proofs of the efficiency of his work of the night before.

Obed Malley was pale and nervous. Somehow he was afraid that the ghost of his victim would return to plague him.

"You are sure of it this time?" he asked.

"Yes—doubly sure."

"And no afterclap can come to plague either of us?"

"No. I am as much concerned as you are. You would not be the one to suffer anyway, for you have not been in this thing at all."

"No, that's so, and yet were you and Stanton to swear against me, I would swing with you."

"So you would."

"Of course," and he started to write out a check for the young politician.

"No, don't give me a check," said he. "Give me the money, and then no one can trace it up."

"You are right," and he tore up the check. "It's best to leave no records to be explained. But is there any danger of us having to explain anything at all?"

"No. All we have to do is to keep quiet and say nothing."

"That won't be a hard thing to do."

In the afternoon of the day following the evening when Dan made the speech at the temperance meeting the well-known reformer called at his boarding-house to see if he could not engage him to speak regularly for him.

The landlady informed him that Dan did not return home the evening before, and that she had not heard from him.

"Is that a frequent occurrence with him, madam?" he asked.

"It is not unusual, and yet, if not interfered with, he never fails to come home of nights."

"He left the hall last night in a carriage," he said to her. "A gentleman offered to bring him home, and he accepted the offer."

"It is possible he may have gone home with the gentleman," said the landlady. "You had better go there and see."

"But, unfortunately, I don't know who the gentleman is."

"Well, that is unfortunate. Did he intend to speak again to-night?"

"Yes, madam."

"Then he'll be there if he is not detained against his will."

The reformer went away, and the landlady wondered if the young man was again in trouble.

But she made up her mind to go to the hall that night to hear him if he spoke. She had always liked him, believing that he had some good in him.

The hall was crowded as never before in its history.

People were eager to see and hear the youth tell his story, and they almost fought for the privilege of getting seats.

But the time passed and he did not return.

The people became impatient.

Then it was that the reformer came forward and told how

he had gone to McCrae's boarding-house and found that he had not returned home since the meeting the night before.

"Something has happened to him again," he said, "and I think this meeting ought to appoint a committee to look into this thing and see what has become of him."

The committee was appointed, and then the meeting went on. But the one whom they wanted to see and hear was not there; hence the meeting lacked the fire and interest of the one the night before.

The reformer said he hoped to have him with them to-morrow evening, or else news of him that would be satisfactory, and dismissed the audience.

The landlady was introduced to a number of ladies and gentlemen. Among them was Emily Rives.

"My dear," said she to the young lady, "I think I have seen your picture in his room. Yes, I am sure I have!"

"Will you let me call to-morrow and see it?"

"Yes, if you wish to."

CHAPTER XV.

A NIGHT OF DANGER.

In the meantime what had become of Dan McCrae?

We have seen that he was knocked on the head, robbed of his valuables, and then thrown into the East River up in Astoria.

The water instantly revived him, and he struck out wildly to get a hold on to something.

He was too much astonished to cry out.

His hand caught a plank which had come floating down that way, and by that means he held his head above the water.

By degrees he pulled himself together and figured out that he had been attacked, left for dead, and thrown into the river.

He held on to the plank to enable him to gather his scattered wits and get his bearing.

It was very dark. He could see only the dim outlines of the shore, though very near to it. The lights along either shore puzzled him.

He could not make out where he was.

At last he struck against an old pier, and caught hold of it. The plank floated away from him, so he had to climb up on the pier, or remain there all night.

When he started to climb, he found out that he was very weak. Then his head pained him where he was struck, and at times he felt quite dizzy.

But he succeeded in climbing up to the top of the pier, where he sat down to rest and make another effort to get his bearings.

"I have made a narrow escape," he said to himself, as he sat there. "They threw me into the river for dead. They have broken my head, I fear. Oh, how it aches! Where am I now? He hit me on the head with something, and that is all I can recollect. Who was he? He pretended to be one of the temperance people. They will kill me yet, I fear."

He felt in his pockets and found that everything had been taken out of them. He hadn't even a penny.

"I have been robbed of everything I had with me," he said. "I must go to some house and ask for help, or else find my way to a police station."

Getting on his feet he made his way to the shore from the old pier, and walked along a dark street till he merged into one which seemed to be a sort of thoroughfare.

Turning up that street, he saw a policeman on a corner.

Going up to him, he said:

"Officer, I've been knocked on the head, robbed, and thrown into the river for dead."

"That's pretty tough, isn't it?" the officer asked.

"Yes, very," and he leaned against a tree for support.

"Much hurt?"

"Yes."

"Come with me, then," and he took him by the arm and led him to the police station.

"Where am I now?" he asked of the officer in charge of the station.

"You are in Astoria."

The officer examined his wound, and decided to send for the police surgeon to come and attend to it.

In half an hour or so the surgeon came and examined it.

"You have had a pretty hard blow with a blunt instrument," he said to him.

"But is the skull broken?"

"I am unable to say at present," was the reply. "I can tell better in the morning. I'll dress it now as best I can, and do the other after sunrise."

He then gave his name, age and residence, after which he sank into a deep sleep from which it seemed to be impossible to awaken him.

When he did awake it was high noon, and two physicians were at work examining the extent of his injuries.

"Your head is not cracked," said the doctor to him. "But the concussion has been severe."

"You—think—I can live?"

"Oh, yes, if brain fever does not set in," replied the doctor.

"I don't think I have brains enough for that."

"You want quiet and rest more than anything else."

"Is there a hospital here where I can have all that?"

"Can you pay for what you need?"

"Yes, I think I can. I have some money in the bank."

"Then I can take you over to my house and give you all the attention you need."

"That will suit me very well. I don't want to go to any hospital."

He was moved over to the doctor's residence, where he was given a good room and faithful attendance during the afternoon and evening that followed.

By some singular neglect of the police officials the report of the case was not made until several days had passed, and then it seemed to be of sufficient importance to attract an investigation.

He recovered rapidly, and at the end of four days he drew money from the bank by check, and got the doctor to accompany him to his home.

"Why, Mr. McCrae," cried the landlady on seeing him, "where have you been all this time?"

"I have been in charge of Dr. Osborne here, who treated me for a broken head."

"What! Who broke your head?" she exclaimed.

He told her the story, and asked her to keep it a secret for him a few days.

"I want to put the police on the track of the villains," he said.

"I won't say a word about it," she said, and strange to say she kept her word.

The boarders knew he had returned, but had no idea what had happened to him. They came in and greeted him cordially, the women being extremely sympathetic in their welcome to him.

As he had been robbed of his pistol he went out and bought another.

"I am going to call on Obed Malley and see whether or not he has any knowledge of the attempt that has been made

on my life. If he starts on seeing me and turns pale, I will know that he is at the bottom of it."

That evening he went out alone to go to Malley's place. He pulled his hat well down over his face and his collar well up around his ears so as to not be recognized by anyone about the place.

He did not go in till he had seen Malley and Gus Meyer go into the little office together and close the door behind them.

Then he walked in and advanced to the door of the little office, which he pushed open, and walked in.

Meyer was the first to see him.

He glared like one confronted by a ghost. Malley groaned, and tried to rise to his feet. But the power of locomotion seemed to be denied to him for the moment.

Dan gazed first on one and then at the other, assuming a stern and resolute air. Meyer fell out of his chair, keeping his eyes fixed on Dan, as if unable to do otherwise.

"And you, too, Obed Malley," said Dan, turning toward the liquor dealer, "you are as guilty as he. Vengeance will come to both of you."

The next moment he disappeared through the door, and passed out to the street ere either of them could recover from their surprise.

Out on the street he hastened away in the crowd.

"It was Gus Meyer who struck me down in the carriage," he said. "His terror at sight of me plainly showed that. It was not Obed Malley, for I would have known him by his size and walk. They worked together to put me out of the way, and now I am going to work to make Obed Malley wish he had never been born. He shall tell me where Nellie is, or I'll shoot him as I would a dog."

He made his way up to the street, and was about to turn out of the way to permit a lady and two children to pass, when he heard a yell close behind him.

He looked at the man from whom it came, and was amazed at seeing Stanton leaning up against the side of a house, trembling like a leaf, the picture of terrorized cowardice.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE VILLAINS FRIGHTENED.

When Obed Malley and Gus Meyer found themselves once more the only occupants of the little room in the rear of his place of business, the former glared at the latter like one in a nightmare.

Meyer was too much broken up to know what to do or say. He was really speechless for the time being. He looked at Malley and saw that he was as badly frightened as himself.

"My God!" he groaned, as he sat down on the chair again. "I was never so frightened in all my life."

"Nor I. What does it mean?"

"I don't know."

"Was it his ghost?"

"I don't know. Did you hear him speak?"

"Yes, and he accused me of being as guilty as you were."

"And so you are."

"Yes, yes, so I am," and he buried his face in his hands and shook like a leaf.

Meyer sat like one too much demoralized to move. His nerves were all unstrung.

Obed Malley finally looked at him, and asked:

"What's to be done?"

"What can we do?" Meyer asked in turn.

"I don't know," and he again lapsed into silence.

One of the employees who had helped to hold Dan when he was seized and forced to drink half a bottle of brandy came in and asked:

"Did you see 'im, sir?"

"See who?" Malley asked.

"Dan McCrea. He was in here a few minutes ago."

"Yes, I—I—saw his ghost."

"Ghost! He ain't no more a ghost than I be," laughed the man, for he had not heard that Dan was dead.

He went out, and Obed Malley glared at Meyer.

His whole demeanor had changed in a moment.

"What sort of a job is this you have put up on me, Gus Meyer?" he demanded.

"I don't understand you," said Meyer, glaring at him. "I haven't put up any job on you."

"What did I pay you \$10,000 for?" he demanded.

"Oh, I understand you. Stanton and I both thought he was done for, sure. If he was not he has more lives than any cat I ever heard of."

"Well, a man ought to be sure of a thing of that kind. We may have the police in here at any moment. He knows as well as we do who it was that made the attempt. If I am arrested, I'll have you slugged as sure as my name is Obed Malley."

"I am as much in danger as you are," said Meyer, "and you could not have been more sure of the job than I was. I did not think it was necessary to cut his head off to make sure of it, nor would you, either. He was as limp and lifeless as a wet rag when we threw him into the river, and how he came to show up again is more than I can dream of. I'll make sure of him next time for my own safety."

"You have no time to lose now. He came here to see if his presence would surprise us. It knocked us both cold, and, after accusing us, went away. I'll bet a thousand dollars he is now with the chief of police."

"Keep cool, Mr. Malley. They can't hang a man on mere suspicion in this part of the world. He can't prove anything against us, as I took every precaution to prevent that. We were too well disguised for that. The horses can't be found, for they were painted with large white spots, and the paint was removed before they were returned. Bah! We have just had a good scare, and that's all it will amount to."

They talked a little while longer, and were about to separate, when the attendant came in to tell Mr. Malley that a man in the bar-room insisted on seeing either him or Gus Meyer.

"Who is he?"

"I don't know, sir, though I have seen him here before. He is very much excited."

"Show him in."

The attendant went out, and a few moments later Stanton dashed into the little office, his eyes glaring and hair on end.

"Oh, Lord!" he chattered, as if a chill had seized him. "I—I—saw his ghost."

"Whose ghost?"

"That young fellow McCrae's!"

"He isn't a ghost yet," said Meyer. "We have got to do the work over again."

"He isn't dead?"

"No; he got out in some way. He's worse than a Kilkenny cat for living."

Stanton dropped into a chair and stared at Meyer. He could not understand how it could be that Dan McCrae was alive. He had helped carry him from the carriage to the water and cast him in, and knew that he was dead.

He shook his head and said:

"No, no, he is dead—I am sure of that. He was dead when we——"

"Hush-sh!" and Meyer clapped a hand over his mouth to shut off his flow of words. "Don't talk like a fool."

Stanton insisted that it was Dan McCrae's ghost he had seen on the street, till Malley told him that he had been there and spoken to him, adding:

"You've got to do it over again, and lose no time at it, either."

"Yes," said Malley, "it must be done over again, and done to a finish, too."

"I did all I was told to," said Stanton. "I drove the carriage, painted the horses, and——"

"So you did," said Meyer, interrupting him. "You shall have the same pay again."

"Enough said!" and he shook hands with Meyer. "Next time you hit 'im make a ten strike of it."

"Just one more chance is all I want," said Meyer. "It's the first time in my life I ever had such work as this. I'll do this job and quit," and he arose to leave the room.

Stanton went out with him, leaving Obed Malley alone in the little office.

Out on the street Meyer said to Stanton in an undertone:

"This is bad business for all hands. How that fellow turned up alive again passes my understanding."

"And mine, too," said Stanton.

"It means that we are liable to be arrested at any moment and sent up the river for ten or twenty years. McCrae is a lucky man. He has already killed one man and shot away a part of one of your ears. If we don't let up and get out we'll wish we had, that's all."

Stanton was thoroughly demoralized at his words, and did not make any reply for a minute or two; and Meyer was fully as much worried himself. He locked arms with him and said:

"I am going to skip. If you want to save yourself, too, I'll give you a thousand dollars to see you through. I am going to Australia."

"I'll go, too."

"Very well. Meet me at Chambers and Broadway at noon to-morrow and I'll give you the money. No more of this sort of work for me."

It was thus agreed and then they parted, Meyer going to his quarters to spend the night in destroying papers and arranging for his flight.

In his room he sat down and gave way to bitter reflections.

"Thus ends all my political aspirations," he muttered, as he leaned back in his chair. "I am now on the verge of ruin. McCrae may swear out a warrant for my arrest at any moment. I took every precaution against recognition, yet I am sure that he knows all about it. At any rate, he knows enough to make any attempt on my part to get political positions abortive. Obed Malley gave me \$10,000 for the job. I gave Stanton \$1,000. I'll give him a thousand more and leave with the balance. In some other part of the world I may work up the career I aspired to here. Malley can't make any complaint against me. His own peril will make him keep still. I think Stanton is scared enough to skip out, too. Dan McCrae will yet get Malley in prison, if not under the gallows. He has some sort of a grip on him under which he squirms. I am going to get away before he gets one on me."

CHAPTER XVII.

TWO VILLAINS SKIP OUT.

Precisely at noon the day following the events related in the preceding chapter Gus Meyer met Stanton at the corner of

Chambers street and Broadway. Handing him an envelope, he said:

"The money is in the envelope. Get out of the city immediately. Go to Canada and take a steamer for England. I'll meet you in Melbourne inside of six months, and there we'll go into business together and be honest men again."

"Yes," said Stanton. "I'll go right up to the Grand Central Depot now," and they shook hands together at parting.

Meyer then proceeded to make his preparations to leave at once.

His first move was to get up a good disguise which would keep the detectives and police off till he could get beyond their reach.

That was done within an hour, and then he felt better.

With a trunk marked "J. M. D., New York," he took passage on a steamer under the name of "John M. Derwent" for Liverpool.

Two days passed, and Obed Malley wondered if Meyer and his man Stanton were at work on the job he had hired them to do.

"Have you seen anything of Meyer to-day?" he asked of one of his bar-keepers.

"No, sir. He has not been here since you were with him the other night."

"If he comes in tell him to see me."

"Yes, sir."

Two more days passed, and then Obed Malley sent one of his employees in search of Gus Meyer. The man went to his office and hotel. In both places they knew nothing of him.

Then it was that the rich liquor dealer began to suspect that the young politician had played him false. In a couple of days more he was satisfied that Meyer had left the city.

"I am out \$10,000 on the rascal," he said. "I shall have to do the work myself to make sure of its being done right. I guess he thought Dan was going to put the officers on the track and arrest him and Stanton, and I wonder he has not done so before now. It must be that he has no proof on which to base any charges. Oh, if I could get him to drinking once more."

After leaving Stanton on the street utterly demoralized by his appearance, Dan returned to his home and went to bed. He slept well, but his head was still quite sore from the blow he received from the hand of Meyer.

After breakfast the next morning a carriage drove up to the door and a young lady alighted. She ran up the stoop and rang the bell.

"Is Mr. McCrae at home?" she asked of the servant girl.

"Yes, mum!" said the girl, showing her into the parlor.

Dan came in a few minutes later to find that she was Emily Rives, the daughter of the old friend of his father.

They greeted each other cordially, and then she asked:

"Why have you not been to see me, Dan?"

"Because it has not been in my power to do so," he replied, and he told her of the attempt on his life on the night of his appearance at the great temperance meeting.

She was shocked beyond measure, and advised him to have the parties arrested.

"I can't swear who they were," he said, "for I never saw them before that night that I can remember."

"It's too bad," she said.

"Yes, but I'm going to have the matter looked into by a good detective and see if it cannot be traced up."

"Have you seen anything of the men since?"

"Of course not."

"Have you heard anything from Nellie?"

"No."

"Oh, if you could only find her!"

"Yes, if I could," and he sighed.

"Mr. Cranleigh asked me to see if you would speak again for him," said Emily, "and that's what I called for to-day."

"Would you advise me to do so?" he asked. "I've had no experience in public speaking, you know."

"Yes, do so, by all means. I believe you are a born orator, and——"

"Ah, you were always my friend, Emily Rives, and I owe you a debt of gratitude which will rest upon me as long as I live."

She blushed like a schoolgirl and said:

"I have always believed in you, Dan, and I know that if you will hold out you can rise high in the world."

"And I have never even believed in myself," he said. "You have been the only friend I have had. I have had to fight the battle all alone."

"And you have fought it bravely, Dan. You were down in the gutter three years ago. I never thought you would stay there, but the change is wonderful."

"Obed Malley did his best to get me into the gutter again. Yes, I'll speak at the meeting again if Mr. Cranleigh wants me to."

"He does want you to, and so do all the people who go there. I'll come for you in my carriage with Mr. Cranleigh or some one else."

"Thanks. I would rather have you come than anyone else."

"I will be sure not to knock you on the head. You attack the heart."

She laughed again and left a few minutes later.

That evening he addressed an immense audience, and the thought came to him when he had finished that he could speak, and that it was his mission to do so.

He created a sensation by making the public charge that Obed Malley had done his best to make him a drunkard and keep him in the gutter.

The papers the next day commented on the singular charge, and doubted the accuracy of the statement. Obed Malley himself laughed at it, and thanked him for the advertisement he had given his business.

After several speeches had been made, the crowd became so great that a larger hall had to be procured, and twice as many people came to hear him.

One day a poor man came to him and said:

"I think I can tell you something about your sister."

"In the name of Heaven do it, then," he replied.

"I knew both your parents well, and when they were dead I was told by John Moran that Obed Malley got her a situation in a collar manufactory in Troy."

"Where can John Moran be found?" Dan asked.

"He lives over on the west side of the town near Tenth avenue. I don't know his number, but can take you to the place."

"Do so then. I am ready to go now."

They went to the place and saw Moran's wife. She told them where John was at work.

On finding him, they questioned him about it.

"Yes," he said in reply to the question. "I know that he did send her up to Troy to work in a collar factory. He has a brother living up there."

"That is enough, my friend," said Dan, grasping his hand. "I am going up there to look for her. If I find her I'll see you again to show you my gratitude. She is all I have in this world."

That night he took the train for Troy.

Early the next morning he went to several collar factories

and asked if a girl of the name of Nellie McCrae was on their payroll.

At last he found her name among the long list of the big factories.

He asked to be permitted to see her, and was told by the foreman of her department that she had not been to work for two days.

"Please give me her address, then?" he asked.

"That we haven't got," was the reply. "We do not have the addresses of our employees."

"Can you find out for me if any one of the other girls know where she lives?"

The manufacturer seemed annoyed, and Dan spoke up, saying:

"She has been lost to her relatives for some years, and they are very anxious to find her."

That seemed to have a good effect on the manager of the mill, and he had the inquiry made, with the result of finding one little girl who knew where she lived, but did not recollect the number of the house.

She was willing to go with him, but could not leave her work till noon, when she would have a half hour allowed then for dinner.

Dan went away, promising to return to the factory at noon.

On going down one of the streets of the city an hour later, Dan was dumfounded at seeing Obed Malley riding by in a carriage.

By his side sat another man whose face he could not see well enough to make out who he was like.

"That means that she is here," he said, in an excited tone. "I am going to follow that carriage if it leads me to Canada!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

BROTHER AND SISTER MEET.

He ran along the street a couple of blocks, keeping the carriage well in sight. At last he saw a carriage near the curb waiting for a fare.

"Do you want a fare?" he asked of the driver.

"Yes, boss."

"Well, keep that carriage in sight, no matter where it goes. I can pay any bill, even to buying the rig."

"All right, boss."

Dan sprang inside and sat so as to be able to keep an eye on the carriage in front of him.

The chase lasted half an hour and ended, for a time, in front of a workingman's cottage on a by street.

A man got out whom Dan didn't know, and went into the house, leaving Malley in the carriage.

Ten minutes later a young woman came out and got into the carriage, which was immediately driven off.

Then the chase was resumed, and ended at the depot, where the young woman boarded a west-bound train with Malley.

Dan sprang out and paid the hackman double fare, and then bought a ticket on the train in which Malley had secured seats for himself and the young woman.

He got a seat in the same car, where he could see Malley, yet could not get a glimpse of the face of the young woman.

By and by Malley got up and went into the smoker.

Dan arose and went over to where the young woman sat, and looked her full in the face.

It was Nellie—his long-lost sister. He could not be mistaken, though four years had passed since he had seen her.

To avoid a scene in the cars he went back to his seat to

calm himself. He was so unnerved that he could scarcely walk. He reeled back to his seat, and sat down to think.

Where was he taking her? Would it not be better for him to find out and watch him?

While he was thinking about that the train slowed up, and Malley came back and spoke to her. She got up, and both went to the platform of the car to get off.

Dan did likewise, and in a minute or two later the train stopped at a small way station. Dan, Malley, and Nellie got off, and the train went on its way.

Only the station master and two or three countrymen were about the station.

Dan kept his eyes on Malley and his hand on the revolver in his pocket, as he stood not ten feet away from them.

Suddenly Obed Malley looked around at him, and their eyes met.

The face of the liquor dealer turned ashen hued, and he leaned against a box for support.

Dan advanced toward him, and he started.

The next moment he drew a revolver and fired at Dan.

The bullet grazed Dan's cheek.

The next moment Dan fired, and Malley felt the bullet graze his cheek.

Nellie screamed and ran into the station for protection.

The two or three countrymen scattered to avoid being made targets of by the two strangers.

Quick as a flash Dan fired again, and the pistol dropped from Malley's hand.

"I am hit!" he said.

"Glad to hear it!" replied Dan. "If you make another move I'll lay you out!" and he went to the door of the little depot, where he found Nellie trembling like a leaf.

"Nellie, don't you know me?"

She sprang forward and gazed in his face.

"Oh, brother!" she screamed, and then sank down in a dead swoon on the rough floor.

"Water—water! quick!" cried Dan, picking her up in his arms and covering her face with kisses.

The station master brought a dipper-full of water from a well near by, and dashed it in her face. She gasped and opened her eyes.

"Nellie—sister!" he cried. "I've been looking for you ever so long!"

"Oh, Dan, they told me you were dead—that you had died in the gutter, and that you would have been buried in Fetter's Field if Mr. Malley had not ordered otherwise. Oh, why did they deceive me so?"

"And they would not tell me where you were," he said. "I quit drinking, and went to work for myself and you, though they tried to keep me drinking all the time. Thank God I have found you at last."

Nellie clung to his neck and cried in her joy. She became so hysterical that he could not get any satisfactory answer to his questions.

At last he turned to the station-master, and said:

"Watch that man out there, and see that he does not get away."

"What man?"

"The one I shot at."

"He has gone, sir."

"Gone? Where?"

"I don't know, sir, but he has gone."

Dan rushed out and looked all around in search of Obed Malley.

But the burly liquor dealer was not in sight anywhere around.

"Where could he have gone?" Dan asked of the station-master.

"He could have gone in a dozen directions," was the reply, "while you were talking to your sister."

"But he is wounded."

"He can't be very badly wounded since he managed to get away from you."

"He told me he was hit and dropped his pistol. I wanted to have him arrested."

"There's no constable around here to arrest him for you."

"When does the next train pass here going east?"

"In one hour and ten minutes."

"We'll take that train back to Troy."

"No—no—not to Troy," cried Nellie. "Not to Troy! Take me home if you have a home."

"Do you remember Emily Rives?" he asked her.

"Yes."

"Well, her parents are dead and she lives all alone in a big house. Only the other day she told me that if I found you to bring you to her, and that you could have a home with her as long as you lived."

"She was always a good girl," said Nellie.

"Yes, and is more so now than ever. She is very rich now, I believe."

The train came along in time, and they boarded it. Obed Malley did not show up, and they went away without seeing him again.

When the train rolled into the depot at Troy Dan and Nellie kept their seats. They were going to go on down to New York.

"I'll telegraph to Emily from Albany," he said to her as they sat there in the car, waiting for the next train to leave.

"Oh, there comes Obed Malley's brother and two of his friends! Don't let them take me away from you."

Three men came boldly up to them, and one grabbed Nellie by the arm, hissing in her ear:

"Make a scene here and I'll choke the life out of you."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE DRUMMER'S BOLD FRONT.

The sudden seizure of his sister staggered Dan for a moment or two. At first he didn't know but what it was being done under forms of law. Then when he heard Nellie call to him to save her he started toward her.

"You're a man," said one of the burly men, who had come in with the man, "just keep quiet if you want to live awhile longer."

"Hands off there!" cried Dan, at the same time drawing his revolver.

"Save me! Oh, save me!" screamed Nellie, trying to pull herself loose from the man.

Crack!

Dan fired at him.

He let go and staggered toward the door of the car.

Quick as a flash Dan turned to the man who had threatened him and asked:

"Do you want to live awhile longer?"

"Yes," he replied, making for the door also.

The whole thing took place in less than a half minute, and was over with ere the passengers knew what had happened.

Nellie sprang back to the side of her brother, and then the passengers crowded around to ask as to what it all meant.

Dan explained to them that certain parties were trying to kidnap his sister, adding:

"And before they succeed somebody will have to head a funeral procession."

"That's right," said a New York drummer. "I am going back to the city. If you need any help on the way, call on me, and I will give you the best I have in the shop."

"Oh, thank you, sir!" exclaimed Nellie. "They have had me separated from my brother, who is all I have in this world, for more than four years. They wouldn't let either of us know where the other was."

The drummer was charmed with her, and swore he'd stand by them if he had to kill a dozen men.

"I've got a sister myself," he said, "and I would fight for her to the death."

Dan took his hand and said:

"I'll tell you the whole story some day."

Several other passengers offered their services in a cordial manner, and Dan felt that he was in the company of friends.

The train moved out and dashed on its way to Albany.

On its arrival there an officer boarded it with an order to arrest Daniel McCrae for attempted murder.

Dan did not resist.

"I am a law-abiding man," he said. "I'll go back to Troy and face this thing."

"I'll go with you," said the drummer, "and be a witness in your behalf."

"So I will," said another passenger. "I have a few days of leisure time on my hands, and am willing to spend them in the cause of justice."

"I thank you from the bottom of my heart, gentlemen," said Dan. "I have been fighting this battle all alone against powerful odds. A little help is like a glimpse of Paradise for me."

"Don't you worry," said the drummer. "I am a strong team all by myself, and the two or three men who can get away with me will have to do some very hard work."

"I may be locked up when we get to Troy," said Dan to the drummer, "and in that case my sister will be without a protector. Take charge of her—defend her as you would your own sister—and I'll pay all expenses."

He gave Nellie his pocketbook, and told her to go to a hotel on reaching Troy, and let the two gentlemen look after her safety.

They went to the police headquarters and waited there till an officer came down from Troy after him. During that time he secured a lawyer to whom he told his story, and he went along with them.

At Troy they found that the man who was shot was a brother of Obed Malley, the rich New York liquor dealer. He was very badly hurt, and could not appear in court against Dan.

He was sent to jail to await the injuries the man had received.

Dan's lawyer then began an investigation, and found that James Malley had attempted to seize Nellie on the request of his brother, Obed, who had telegraphed to him to do so.

"He had no right to do that," said the lawyer, "and McCrae did right to shoot in defense of his sister. It is an outrage to lock him up for that."

He made strenuous efforts to get him out that day, but could not do so. The judge, however, promised him that he would investigate the case the next day, and dispose of it as soon as possible.

In the meantime another effort to take Nellie away was made. James Malley's wife, with whom she had boarded ever since coming to Troy, came with two men and asked her to go back home with her.

"I am going to New York with my brother," said Nellie.

"You had better come and stay with me till he can go back. It is not doing you any good staying here at this hotel at a cost of three dollars a day."

"My brother told me to stay here till I heard from him to go elsewhere," returned Nellie, "and I am going to do just as he tells me."

"But it's costing him so much to keep you here."

"I don't think you care anything about what it costs him. He told me to stay here and I am going to do so."

"Just come along with me now!" sternly commanded the woman, and the two men came close up by her side as if to be ready to seize her at a word.

Just then the New York drummer came into the room, which was the public parlor of the hotel, and Nellie said to him:

"They are trying to take me away from my brother again, Mr. Trainor."

"Who are?" the drummer demanded, going up to her side.

"These people here."

Trainor, for that was the drummer's name, looked at the two men and said:

"Dan McCrae placed his sister in my charge as long as he made the jail his home, and the man who gets her away from me against her consent will first have to kill me."

"That is easy enough to do," remarked one of the men.

"Yes, it might seem so, but I don't think you will enjoy the job at all," and he looked as if he did not fear them in the least. "The truth is," he added, "I am not the only one in charge of this young lady. Any attempt to take her away against her consent will result disastrously to those who make it."

"You dare us to try it, do you?" one of the men asked.

"Yes," and he laid his hand on his revolver as he made the reply.

They glared at him for a minute or two as if undecided what to do; then they seemed to come to the conclusion not to attempt to use any force, for they both spoke at the same time, saying:

"We don't want to use force."

"Of course not," said Trainor. "I don't, either."

Mrs. Malley turned to Nellie, and said:

"You will regret this, Nellie, as long as you live."

"I don't think I can ever regret going with my brother. He is all I have in this world, and I am all he has. My duty to him is plain. I am going with him."

"Very well. You will live to regret it. This way of having strange men to protect you is——"

"Madam," said Trainor, interrupting her, "please be careful not to say anything insulting to this young lady."

"Just attend to your business, if you please," snapped Mrs. Malley.

"Just what I am doing, madam, and I hope you will not make it unpleasant."

"I will make it very unpleasant for you if you provoke me," she retorted.

"Then I shall certainly try not to provoke you."

"Young man," said one of the two men with her, "I'd like to meet you outside of this house somewhere."

"When my friend comes in to take my place to protect this young lady I shall be more than happy to meet you," and Trainor bowed and smiled as he spoke.

That was enough. They turned and left the house, and Nellie thanked him for his protection.

CHAPTER XX.

DRIVEN TO DESPERATION.

When he found himself alone on the platform at the little station where he and Dan had exchanged shots, Obed Malley

turned and walked off down the street leading to a store. Turning the corner there, he passed out of sight of the little depot and struck out through the woods.

Half an hour later he struck a road, and waited till he saw a wagon coming along.

"How far is it to the next village?" he asked of the man in the wagon.

"Seven miles," was the reply.

"Can I hire you to take me there? I have been accidentally shot in the arm, and must get to a doctor as soon as possible."

"Yes, sir. I am going right there. Get up here by me."

He got up in the wagon and the man whipped up his horses and landed him in the village inside of an hour. He paid the farmer five dollars for the ride, and then sent for the village doctor, who came and dressed a very painful flesh wound on his right arm.

Then he went to the telegraph office and telegraphed to his brother in Troy to meet Nellie and Dan on the train and take her away from him. He did not say that he had been shot himself.

In the evening he received a telegram from his brother, saying:

"I am shot. She is still with him, but arrested in Albany."

"My God!" he groaned, as the telegram fell from his hands. "We are both shot and by that boy! Fate is against me? I'd give half my fortune to hear that somebody had shot him. I'm sure I don't know what to do. I guess I had better take the next train and go down to Troy and see what ought to be done."

He took the next train, went to Troy and put up at an obscure hotel under another name. Then he wrote a note to his brother with his left hand, and asked him to get some one whom he could trust to come to him and tell him all that had happened.

An hour later one of the men who was with James Malley when Dan shot him came and told him all that had taken place.

"Dan is now in jail for shooting your brother," he said, "and we are going to try to keep him there till we can get the girl away."

"What's to hinder her abduction?"

"She is protected by a New York drummer, who is a terror. We can't do anything with him. He is wide awake, and ready to shoot any man who tries to interfere with him."

"Still, it seems to me that somebody ought to be smart enough to get away with him."

"Yes, it would seem so, but when one is on his guard it's a very difficult matter to catch him napping."

"I'll give any man \$1,000 to get her away from him, and put her out of his reach."

"That's what your brother told me, and I would like to earn the money; but one can't go into a public hotel and walk off with a woman if she does not want to go."

"Of course not; but there are many ways of taking her along for all that," remarked Obed Malley.

"There may be, but not in a hotel full of people who would lynch any man who tried it."

Obed Malley saw that the man was right, yet he was a man who believed in the power of money to make people exert themselves.

"Where there is a will there's a way," he said, after a pause of some minutes.

"Yes; and Dan McCrae seems to be acting on that principle," returned the man.

"Dan is in jail."

"Yes, but two others equally as vigilant as he are on guard for him. The girl herself is equally as wide awake."

"Then we must put somebody out of the way!" hissed

Obed Malley. "I don't intend to be balked in this matter. I am able to pay for what I want, and I ought to be able to get what I can pay for."

"I suppose so, but I am not going to do anything that will put a noose around my neck. You haven't money enough to do that."

"Oh, I didn't mean that—of course not," and Obed Malley seemed to be half frightened at himself as he spoke. "I shall have to get a lawyer to represent me in court. I don't see any other way of doing it. Can you tell me the name of a good lawyer?"

"I have never had any law business, so I don't know who would be the best one for you."

"Well, I'll go and see James myself and get him to engage a good lawyer for me."

The man went away, and Obed Malley almost stabbed himself for having made a mistake as to his character.

"I said too much to him," he said to himself. "If she should disappear, or he, and anything be said about it, that man could say enough to get me into trouble. I don't know why James sent him to me. I must go and see him about it."

Painful as his wounded arm was, Obed Malley entered a carriage and was driven to the residence of his brother. He found him even worse hurt than himself, and in a bad humor.

"So you are shot, too?" said James, as Obed came into the room.

"Yes, in the arm."

"Well, had you telegraphed me that he had shot you, or that he was even dangerous, I'd have been spared this wound."

"I didn't think it at all necessary."

"Well, it was. I could have had him arrested and locked up on the arrival of the train, and then she would have been in my power."

"Yes, but I never thought of that."

"Well, I might have been killed, all because you didn't think to post me."

They consulted for half an hour, and then made up their minds that to go into court against Dan would be to make some very unpleasant revelations.

"I'll wait till I get back to New York, and then have him attended to," said Obed. "Try to keep all this a secret here, if you can. I am going to take this evening's train for home."

He left Troy that evening and reached New York early the next morning, had his wound dressed by a physician who did not know him.

On making inquiries he learned that Meyer and Stanton had not been seen in the city since he left to go up to Troy.

He lost no time in having Dan's room at his home burglarized. But the burglar didn't get the wallet, which was the one thing he was after.

Then he sat down to look the situation squarely in the face.

"He'll be back here in a few days," he said to himself, "and I can't help myself. I suppose I've done all in my power to keep him down in the gutter. He is one in a million. Only one in a million ever get up once they fall so low. Probably if I don't bother him he won't bother me. I'll wait and see."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE LUNATIC IN COURT.

Dan's lawyer in Troy was a very bright, plucky fellow. He was full of legal resources as any man in the profession,

and so when the court opened the next day after his incarceration, he had Dan before the judge on a writ.

James Malley's lawyer had been instructed to drop the case, as his brother did not want any more publicity given the case. He told the judge that his client would not prosecute, and that he would withdraw the charge against defendant.

Then Dan's lawyer proceeded to make a formal charge against James Malley of attempting to forcibly abduct Nellie McCrae. A warrant was issued and the man arrested at his home. He gave bail, and the case was set down for the next term of court, which would begin in two months.

Dan and Nellie, accompanied by young Trainor, the New York drummer, then took the train for New York, where they arrived in the evening.

Trainor begged to be permitted to call on them at their new home, which was to be at the residence of Emily Rives, over in Brooklyn. Of course, they could not refuse him, for he had been like a brother to them.

The meeting of Nellie and Emily was like that of two long-separated sisters. They hugged, and kissed, and cried to their hearts' content, and Emily declared that she should live with her always.

"No, I am going to live with my brother," said Nellie.

"Then your brother must come here to live," said Emily, "for you shall not leave me, Nellie. I am all alone in the world, and have more money than I know what to do with. You shall enjoy it with me."

Dan had to agree to live in the house with them, and then the two girls were more than happy.

The next day Dan and Nellie told Emily all about their adventures in Troy and beyond.

"You may depend upon it," said Emily, "that Obed Malley has a motive in all that. I know that he tried to keep you in the gutter, and now that things have gone so far you ought to have some good lawyer investigate and see what the motive was."

"But I don't know what to tell the lawyer to investigate," said Dan.

"Tell him the whole story and let him make up an opinion about it," she advised.

"Well, I'll do as you advise," he said, and he began to look around for a good lawyer.

In the meantime Emily Rives insisted on his speaking again at the great public meetings then being held in the city. Enormous crowds came to hear him. Many young people who had drunk with him in the terrible past came to hear him, and they were moved as they had never been before. They signed the pledge to try to pull themselves up out of the gutter as he had done, and the interest and excitement grew deeper and more extended every day.

He seemed to be inspired when he spoke, for his words came like a torrent, and burning words they were, too.

One day he saw the face of one of Obed Malley's men in the audience while he was speaking. He was one of the three men who had seized him and made him drink brandy till he was drunk.

Then he told the story in a very dramatic manner, rousing the audience to a high state of indignation.

"There sits one of the men now," he said, pointing to the wretch who sat cowering in his seat. "He has come here to see and report to his master, Obed Malley."

Every man and woman in the vast audience rose up to get a look at the man.

"Where is he! Where is he!" cried hundreds of voices, and the excitement rose to fever heat.

Dan went down from the platform and pointed the man

out to the audience. The people hissed like a thousand serpents, and the man was glad enough to make his escape from the place.

The incident created great excitement in the city, and all the papers took up the incident and gave widespread publicity to it.

Obed Malley would not say one word to any paper man about it, nor would he permit any of his employees to do so.

But the incident set the people to thinking, and vast audiences came to hear the young man who had pulled himself up out of the gutter speak of his terrible experience.

In the meantime a newspaper man got hold of the New York drummer, and from him learned the news of what had occurred at Troy and beyond there. The publication of the story that Dan McCrae had shot both Obed and James Malley for trying to abduct his sister Nellie raised a storm of indignant comment about Malley's head.

When questioned about it Dan and Nellie admitted the facts. That was enough; thousands of drinking men declared that they would never go into Obed Malley's places again, and the strongest kind of a prejudice was raised against him.

The time came for Dan to be tried for having struck Smith on the head with a bottle from the effect of which the latter was an inmate of a lunatic asylum. The relatives of the unfortunate man had been persuaded by someone not to prosecute.

But Dan's lawyer had been instructed to insist on a trial, and the district attorney took up the case.

On the witness-stand Dan told his story, which all the employes of the place denied. The lawyer then had the doctors in charge of the lunatic to describe the nature of his hurts. The victim was brought into the court room for the jury to see him.

The moment he saw Dan he sang out:

"There he is! Seize him! The boss says he must be made to swallow this bottle of brandy. Hold him now—hold his nose and I'll make him take it. There! Isn't that good brandy! Ha, ha, ha! Some people find it hard work enough to buy a drink. You're a lucky dog. We catch you and fill you up without charging you a cent."

The court and jury listened in profound silence till Dan's lawyer called attention to the fact that the man's ravings confirmed the story Dan McCrae had told on the stand.

The result was an acquittal and the strongest kind of an indignation raised against Obed Malley in the public mind.

The verdict rendered, Dan wanted to pay his lawyer. The latter said to him:

"I want to understand the secret of Obed Malley's conduct toward you and your sister. Can you give any reason for it?"

"No, I cannot," replied Dan, "but I may get at it through some papers I have in my possession, which I have not been quite able to understand. I'll bring them to you and let you see what they are. You may be able to tell me something about them."

He went to the bank, and got the wallet which old Joel Nisbet had left to him. Taking it to the lawyer he turned it over to him, together with the story of how he had once been robbed of it.

"Very well," said the lawyer. "I'll look over the papers to-day or to-morrow."

Dan went away, and that evening he spoke before two thousand people in Jersey City against the liquor traffic. His denunciation of the rum power was scathing, and the audience seemed to be wrought up to the highest pitch of excitement.

Early the next day his lawyer called on him at the residence of Emily Rives, and said as he grasped his hand:

"I congratulate you. Those papers in that wallet will enable you to recover your father's fortune from Obed Malley."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE SECRET OF OBED MALLEY'S DOINGS.

Had the earth opened and swallowed up the house Dan could not have been more amazed than he was when he heard the revelation made by his lawyer. In that moment he fully understood the motives that had backed Obed Malley in all he had done to him and his sister.

He dropped into a chair and gazed at the lawyer like one in a dream.

"It seems," remarked the latter, "that Malley had done something to Nisbet that made him a mortal enemy, and he stole the papers, or got possession of them in some way. I found a memoranda among the papers which gives me that impression."

"I guess it's a correct one, too," said Dan. "But this seems like a dream to me. I knew that Obed Malley and my father had some business relations, and that the result was the loss of his fortune."

"He was swindled by Malley from the start, and the papers are positive proof of the fact."

"Can the property be recovered in any way?"

"Every dollar of it," was the reply.

"Then go ahead and get it for us," said Dan.

"Come with me to my office and I will draw up the papers for you to sign. We must proceed against him criminally, have him arrested, and held to bail in a large sum."

Dan went away with him, leaving word with one of the servants that he would return at noon.

But it took the greater part of the day to get the case in shape for the arrest of Obed Malley, and he did not return to dinner. To prevent his sister from feeling alarmed about him, he sent a telegram to her that he would return home in the evening.

When Nellie received that telegram she became possessed with the idea that Dan had been seized again by Obed Malley's men. She asked Emily to go with her in the carriage to see Dan's lawyer.

They went together, and at the door of the building in which the lawyer had his office she met Trainor, the drummer.

"Oh, Mr. Trainor!" she cried. "I am in so much trouble!"

"Why, what's the matter now?" he asked.

She showed him the telegram, and said:

"I am afraid he has met with some trouble of some kind. His lawyer has an office in this building somewhere, and I came to see if he knew anything about it."

"Let me run up and see if he does," said Trainor, running up the stairs to the second floor, where Dan's lawyer had his office. He found Dan in there.

"Hello, Trainor!" said Dan, in great good humor.

"Hello yourself!" he returned. "Are you all right?"

"I guess I am," was the reply.

"Did you send a telegram to your sister stating that you would return home this evening?"

"Yes—why?"

"She and Miss Rives became uneasy, and came over to see about it. They apprehended danger of some sort, I believe."

"Where are they?"

"Downstairs in the carriage."

Dan ran downstairs to see them.

They were greatly relieved when they saw him.

"She would make me come," said Emily, blushing like a rose.

"Ah! You didn't want to come yourself, then," said he, laughing. "Now that you are over here Trainor and I will ride with you up to Central Park. What say you?"

"Oh, yes—do!" said Nellie.

Trainor and he went up to see the lawyer again. The latter told Dan to come back at three o'clock in the afternoon, and the papers would be ready for him to sign.

They then joined the two girls again and were driven up to Central Park.

There they alighted and strolled about under the shade of the trees in perfect freedom from care. They became separated for a half hour or more, Trainor and Nellie going by one path and Dan and Emily following another.

When they met Dan said to Nellie:

"I was worried about you."

"Are you afraid to trust her with me?" Trainor asked.

"Oh, no, not at all. But you know I have to keep a close guard over her."

"Brother, I have chosen him to guard me all my life," said Nellie, blushing crimson. "He has asked me to be his wife, and I said I would if you did not object."

Emily sprang forward, caught her in her arms, and kissed her.

Dan grasped Trainor's hand and shook it, saying:

"I have no objection in the world, only don't take her away from me. If she loves you and thinks she can be happy with you, I surely will not object."

"I shall do all in my power to make her happy," said Trainor.

Then Nellie, released from Emily's arms, ran to Dan, and threw hers about his neck, saying:

"Oh, I do love him! I am so happy!"

Dan kissed her affectionately, and she whispered in his ear:

"Emily loves you—make her happy, too."

Dan looked at Emily in a half-hesitating way, and asked:

"Shall they be happier than we? I love you. Be my wife."

Emily smiled and said:

"Yes—I have loved you since we were children—when you were in the gutter—and all along. They cannot be happier than we are, for no one can be more happy than I am," and she laid her hand in his.

He pressed her to his heart, and gave her a betrothal kiss. Then they sat down on a park bench, and talked only as lovers could talk under such circumstances.

Dan told them the news given him by his lawyer, saying:

"We will not be penniless, Nellie. We shall come into our own again."

"Oh, I am so glad of that!" Nellie cried. "I shall not be a burden to my husband then."

"That you could never be," said Trainor, looking lovingly at her.

Emily turned to Dan and said:

"I almost regret that you will have a penny, for I want to show you how much I love you by giving you half of my own fortune."

"My fortune will equal yours, my dear," he replied. "I want no such sacrifice on your part to show me how much you love me. You came to me when I was in the gutter, and spoke words of kindness to me that sank deep into my soul. I am all the happier that I can come to you prepared to take care of you as I would desire to."

"When shall we marry?" Trainor asked.

"Just as soon as the matter of my father's estate is settled," said Dan.

"Why, that may take years," said Trainor. "I am not disposed to wait so long."

"It is only a question of a few months, I think," said Dan.

"But we don't know what may happen in a few months," replied Trainor. "Nellie may be kidnapped again. I want to make her my wife at once, so I shall have the right to be with her all the time and give her the protection of a good husband."

"I think you are right," said Emily. "Marry her to-day. Why should those who love wait for weeks and months?"

Dan looked at her in some surprise.

"Have you the courage to follow your own advice?" he asked.

"Yes, I think I have."

"Then come on. We'll go home and marry this very evening."

They sprang up, hastened back to the carriage, and hurried down to the office of the lawyer, to whom they gave their plans.

Of course he was surprised, but he congratulated them.

They then rode home with the girls, left them there, and went in search of diamond rings, which they bought and placed on the fingers of their loved ones.

Then they went back to the office, where Dan signed the papers, on which warrants for the arrest of Obed Malley and one of his men were issued.

In the evening they rode to the residence of Emily Rives' pastor, and were there united in wedlock—two as happy couples as ever lived.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE HAPPY COUPLES.

On laying the papers in the case before one of the judges, the warrant for the arrest of Obed Malley was issued. The judge was very much surprised, and asked the lawyer if there was not a mistake somewhere, saying:

"I have known Obed Malley a long time, and hardly think him capable of such things as he is charged with here."

"May it please your honor," said the lawyer, "I have the most indubitable proof that he is one of the worst men in the city. He actually hired a man to murder Dan McCrae, in order to get him out of the way."

When the warrant was granted, the lawyer went with the officer to see it served.

The officer was amazed when he was given the warrant and told to arrest him without delay.

"I'll attend to it inside of an hour," he said.

"You'll attend to it now," said the lawyer, "before the news of the warrant gets to his ears."

The officer went into another room and whispered something to a young man in there. The young man put on his coat and hat and hastily left the office.

"I'll go with you in a few minutes," the officer said to the lawyer.

"Didn't you tell that young man to run and warn Obed Malley that you were coming to arrest him?" the lawyer asked.

"No. What do you take me for?" replied the officer.

"Very well. We'll see. I have a detective watching Malley. If that young man gives him warning I'll have you dismissed from your position."

The officer turned pale and said:

"I am not the man to do a thing of that kind. Come on. I am ready to go with you."

They started for Malley's place, and when they reached there they found that the detective had already arrested him.

"He was going to get away," the detective said. "A young man rushed into his office and said something to him. He sprang up and rushed outdoors, called a carriage, and was about to leave when I arrested him."

"What does this outrage mean?" Malley demanded.

"It means that Dan McCrae is going to have a settlement with you," said the lawyer, looking him full in the face.

"I am ready to make a settlement at any moment," returned the liquor dealer. "Take me to the district attorney's at once, and I'll make the settlement now."

"Take him there, detective," said the lawyer.

"I'll do that myself," said the officer, exhibiting the warrant.

"Never mind the warrant," said the lawyer; "there are no fees in this case for you. I'll attend to you as soon as this matter is settled."

The officer insisted on serving the warrant, and they had to give way to him. But the detective went along and kept an eye on both as they made their way to the district attorney's office.

On arriving there the officials were told that Obed Malley was ready to make restitution of property once belonging to Dan McCrae's father. The property was designated by papers found in the wallet of Joel Nisbet, and in two hours every dollar's worth of it was transferred to Dan and Nellie. The papers were signed and deeds recorded.

"Now that ends the matter, does it not?" Malley's lawyer asked.

"Oh, no. There are several charges against your client. He has simply returned stolen property. We have no right to condone the offense. He has tried to have Dan McCrae murdered. We are going to give him all the law will let him have, if it's ninety-nine years."

Obed Malley ground his teeth with rage, and his lawyer did everything in his power to get Dan's lawyer to refuse to prosecute him to the utmost extremity of the law. "He got Dan McCrae down into the gutter, and his sister into a collar factory in Troy while keeping them out of the property that rightfully belonged to them. Such a villain deserves no sympathy, and will get none from my clients. They are both to be married this evening, and I think it will look a little like poetic justice to have him sleep in jail on the day they are happiest."

"That's a queer idea," said Malley's lawyer.

"Yes, but you must remember that this is a queer case," retorted Dan's adviser. "Malley can hardly be called a man, you know."

The lawyers came near quarreling, and but for the intervention of the district attorney they might have come to blows.

The interest on the property was figured up to several thousand dollars during the time Malley had possession of it. He gave his check for the amount, payable to the order of Daniel and Nellie McCrae.

That settled, the lawyer then had another warrant served on him for attempting the life of Dan.

As soon as he saw him marched off to the Tombs he hastened over to Brooklyn to tender his congratulations to the happy couples and to give them the deeds to the property and Obed Malley's check.

Dan gave him his check for \$1,000 for his services, and told him henceforth he was to be his legal adviser in all things.

"And mine, too," said Emily.

"And mine, also," put in Trainor.

"Thanks," said the lawyer. "I believe I am about as lucky as you fellows are."

"I don't know whether that is a compliment or not," said Emily, laughing. "I know that I am not only the luckiest, but also the happiest woman in the world."

"I am the luckiest man I know of," said Dan. "I have come up out of the gutter to wed the sweetest and best woman in the world."

The friends of the young people were surprised when they heard of the double marriage. The papers had a great deal to say about Obed Malley's downfall, for downfall it was.

He had to sell out two of his places immediately, and the loss of patronage at the others was so marked that any casual observer could see it. At last he advertised all his places for sale preparatory to his leaving for Australia.

Dan had whipped him in the battle, though he fought with all the odds against him. The rich liquor dealer had spent thousands of dollars in trying to crush or kill him, and yet had lost.

He was now out on bail, and his lawyer was exerting every energy to save him from conviction on the charge of the attempt on the life on Dan McCrae.

When the time came for the trial, Dan's lawyer made the discovery that his witnesses had all been bought off, and had left the country. Under that condition conviction was impossible, and he advised that Dan withdraw the suit, which was done.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONCLUSION.

Dan McCrae's triumph over the man who had tried so hard to keep him in the gutter was full and complete. The story of his struggle was familiar to everybody in the two cities, for the clergy spoke of it in their sermons, and the daily papers gave columns of news about it.

Of course, everybody wanted to hear the young man speak, and everywhere he spoke hundreds signed the pledge. He developed a high order of oratory from the simple way in which he told his story.

His wife became the proudest little woman in the city. She loved him with a devotion that was almost a worship, and yet she was all smiles and gentleness to everyone she came in contact with.

As for Nellie, she set her husband up in business, and declared herself the most fortunate of women. Trainor had a fine head for business, and soon began to increase the property rapidly.

Obed Malley finally sold out everything he owned in New York, and bought a ticket for Australia. A few friends came to see him off and bid him good-by.

Among those who came down to the pier to see him off was a man in disguise, whom we have seen before. He had just come back to the city, having heard that he was going to leave the country.

But though he saw Obed Malley off, he did not speak to him or disclose his identity to him or any of his friends present.

But when the steamer was well out of the harbor the man went into a saloon near the river front and called for a drink of ale. When he came out he had changed his identity to that of Gus Meyer, the young politician who had hoped to rise to the top of the political ladder through the influence of Obed Malley.

"He has gone," he muttered to himself, "and I have nothing to fear from him in the future. I know that Dan McCrae is

here yet, but he has recovered his property and married. He won't bother his head about me. Besides, if he did he has no proof that I ever made any attempt on his life. Stanton is not here to peach, and so I've nothing to fear. With a few thousand dollars left one may yet have a chance to rise in the politics of the city."

He walked up to Broadway, and thence toward the City Hall to see how many of his old friends would know and greet him.

He had gotten almost to the steps of the City Hall, when he met a man who stopped and glared at him in open-mouthed wonder.

"Blast my eyes!" the man gasped.

"What's the matter?" Meyer asked, looking hard at him.

Then he saw that a part of an ear was clipped off, and in an instant he recognized that he was face to face with Stanton, the crook, once more.

"Is it you, Stanton?" he asked.

"Yes, and you will be arrested if you don't look out."

"No danger of that."

"Why not?"

"Malley has sold out everything and gone to Australia."

"The deuce!"

"Yes, and McCrae made him give up over \$250,000 worth of property which belonged to him and his sister. That broke him all up and caused him to skip out."

"But won't he go for you if he finds that you are back here?"

"No. He may suspect that I had something to do with that affair you and I were engaged in, but he has no proof of it."

"Well, then, he has no proof on me either."

"No. We are safe enough with Obed Malley out of the way."

"Then I am not going to wear this rig any longer."

"I wouldn't either. But you want to remove it in some saloon where you will not be noticed."

Just then a well-known politician came by, and hailed Meyer with a great deal of enthusiasm.

They shook hands cordially, and then adjourned to a saloon to drink wine and talk over old times. Several other friends came in, and in a little while quite a party had gathered around the young lawyer, all eager to hear of his travels round the world.

He told them a cock-and-bull story of his travels, and they believed every word of it, for they had no good reason to doubt his word.

"How things have changed in the few months I have been gone," he remarked. "Who would have believed that Obed Malley could have wound up as he did?"

"Or that the young fellow from the gutter could have gotten the better of him as he did?" said another one of the party.

"Well, time does work wonders. What the next few years may bring forth the world doesn't know."

He went back to his old office to set up business again. He had nerve and cheek and was again making some headway when one day he came face to face with Dan McCrae in the City Hall Park.

He stopped and turned pale in spite of himself.

"When did you return to the city?" Dan asked.

"A few days ago," was the reply. "I hear that you have met with a streak of good luck since I saw you last."

"Yes, though that is no fault of yours. That ride you gave me up to Astoria came near doing me."

"I don't understand you. What ride are you speaking of?"

"The night you and Stanton took me up to Astoria and threw me into the river."

"You are mistaken. I never did you such a turn as that."

"I beg your pardon. I have all the facts in my possession, and if you don't follow Obed Malley's example and leave the United States, I'll give you the full benefit of the law on the subject."

"Do you threaten me?"

"Yes. You can have twenty-four hours in which to get out," and Dan went away.

Meyer decided to go, and Stanton went with him, but in a year or two the latter returned to be killed while trying to burglarize a house.

Thus ends the story of Dan McCrae. He is a prosperous business man to-day, the father of two children. Nellie has one child and is happy. Dan is all the better for having fought the battle all alone.

THE END.

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